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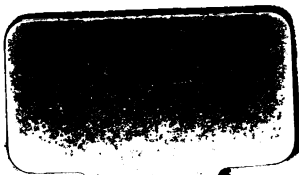
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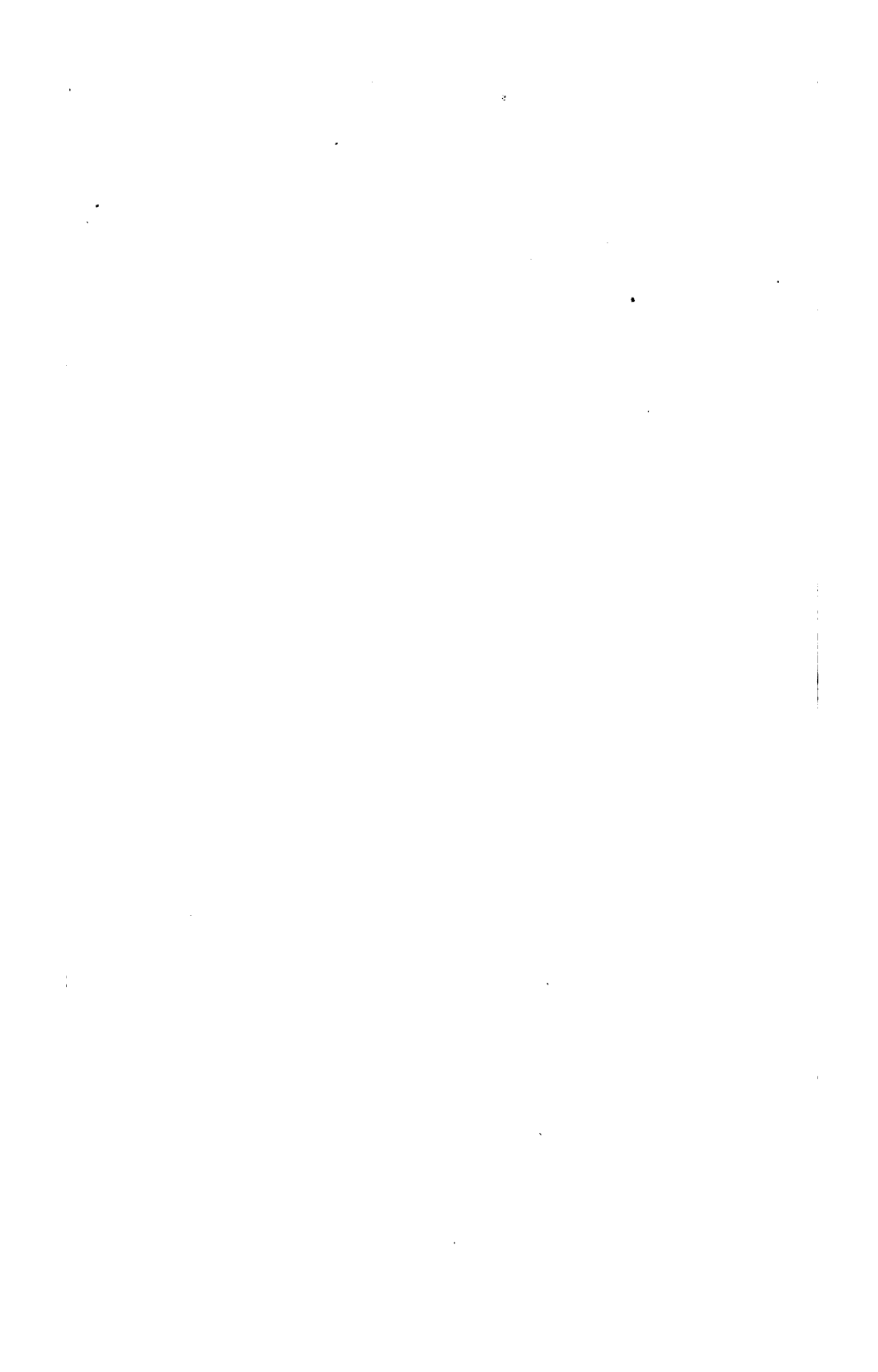
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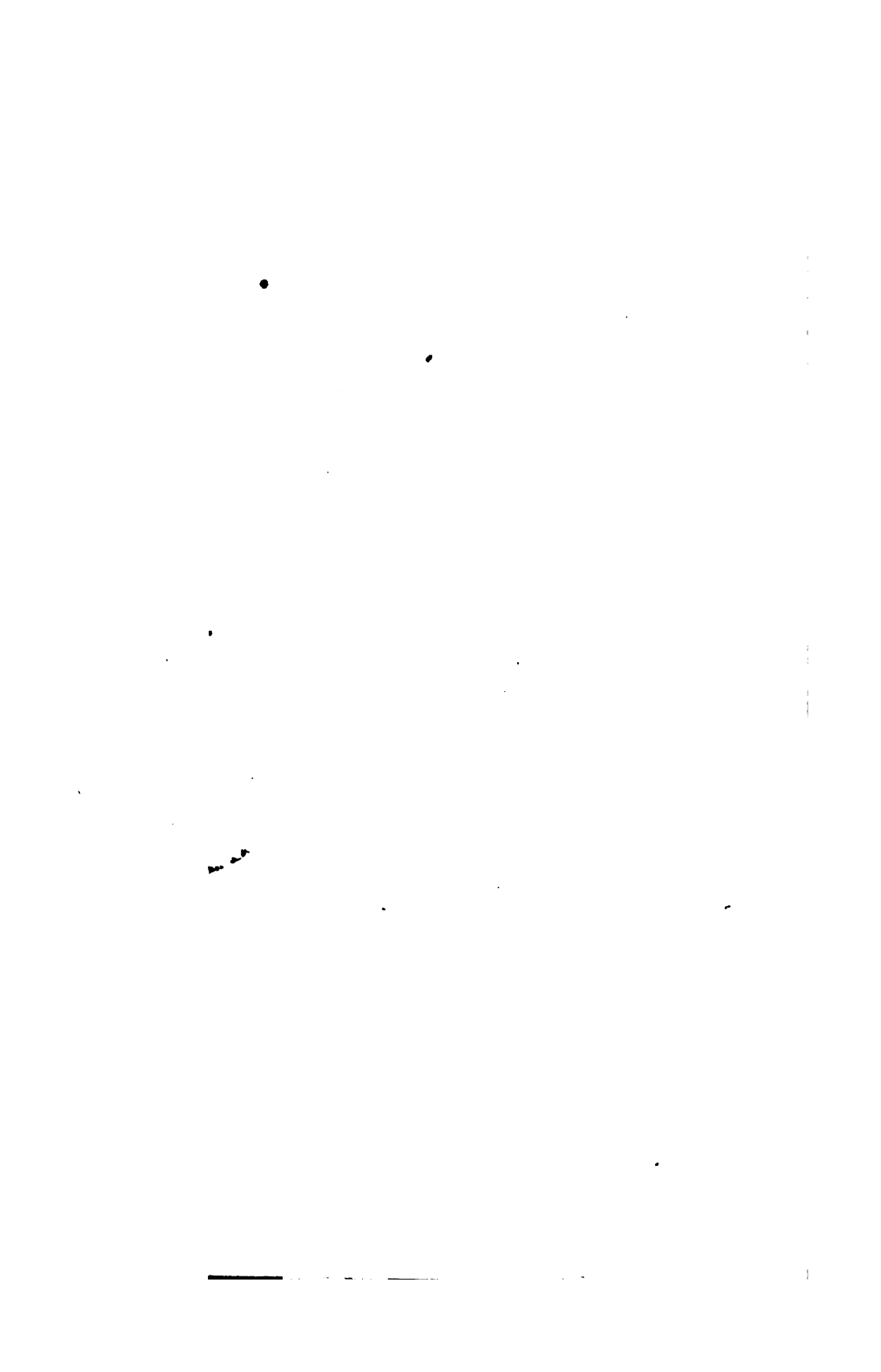




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A

PHYSICIAN'S TALE.

BY

HEBERDEN MILFORD.

"Maids as well as youths have perished
From fruitless love too fondly cherished."

Coleridge's "Sibylline Leaves."

"We wither from our youth—we gasp away—
Sick—sick; unfound the boon—unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
But all too late,—so we are doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'tis the same—
Each idle—and all ill—and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name,
And Death the sable smoke, where vanishes the flame.

"Childe Harold," Canto iv., Stan. cxxi.



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A PHYSICIAN'S TALE.

CHAPTER I.

"We'll wake the still echos of slumb'ring morn."

OLD SONG

"———Our Curate, one whom all believe
Pious and just, and for whose fate they grieve;
All see him poor, but even the vulgar know,
His merits, love, and their respect bestow.
A man so learned you shall seldom see,
Nor one so honoured."

CRABBE.

Poor Moreton, when he had returned from
school and purposed a day upon Jumper, he

would leap out of bed and impatiently tear open the shutters of his dormitory, ere it was thoroughly light, to see the state of the weather. Even in his boyish eagerness, and actuated by all that impetuosity so characteristic, as we have seen, of his nature, he was not more excitable and anxious on hunting mornings than the churchman.

Behold the rector, he peeringly thrusts his head out of the window to discern the face of the sky, whilst his own forsooth, bears all the unequivocal impress of that *somnus profundus* in which his corporeal and spiritual being has been obliviously locked not two minutes ago. He has awoken by instinct, and yawns, and rubs his dully orbs as if he were not quite conscious whether dreaming or waking. "They'll run like fury to-day, and Bonny and I will get off in good time to go leisurely to the meet, as it suits not either of our digestive organs to go at a brisk trot so soon after breakfast." With the enunciation of this soliloquy he takes hold of the apex of his night cap, exultingly throws it on the bed, and at once commences

his toilette. His hunting vestments are all laid out and ready to put on, so that he may have the least possible trouble, and the greatest possible comfort. There is the Oxford grey, which has seen as many field-days as the grey coat of Napoleon, and which he values in a precise ratio, with the advance of its seasons—there are the tight-fitting buckskins which have been scoured and pipe-clayed, and made so clean that you cannot behold a speck or a stain disfiguring them—there also the turn-down boots reflecting the morning light like mirrors, and the *Brimigem persuaders*, all ready, and in apple-pie order.

The clock is just striking eight as he descends into the parlour, and squares down to partake of a very substantial repast all piping hot, and which was just brought from the kitchen fire, when the cook heard his creaking boots nimbly count the front stairs. He does not sit slowly masticating those hot rolls and those slices of fried ham, as if he could afford to stay stuffing himself an hour; precisely as the long hand of the hall clock denotes twenty minutes past eight,

he is convulsively seizing his long whip and gloves (the former of which he intimatingly cracks) and is hurrying towards the stable, where Boniface is nervously awaiting his master. Look at him when mounted—why, you might think that he had spent his life in the saddle, he appears as much at home astride the pig-skin as the most white-livered cockney on his high stool in the chambered purlieus of Cornhill or Cheapside, and wonder you may, how that plump, muscular thigh has ever been thrust into these wrinkleless tegumentary coverings,—and if it shall be a rainy day, pray, rector, by what mechanical means of traction do you then divest yourself of the still more pertinaciously adhering coriaceous diffensibles? But Boniface, despite of his rider's distended stomach, will steal away at a tolerable trot; and we are at the cover-side, the hounds are just browng the adjoining hill, and a few straggling horsemen are already on the ground.

As preparatory to ensuing trials, his reverence stealthily extracts from his left

breast a small silver flask, and gives one or two hearty sucks, merely by way of comforting his gastric mucous membrane, and giving a fillip to the digestive disintegration of the hot rolls and fried ham. A ploughman has just shouted (he is still waving his hat and can be seen in maniac gesture), "Tally-ho, Tally ho!" and the fact that pug has stolen away is communicated from front to rear. The hounds have dashed over that wall, and are in full cry. The parson is now very rapidly becoming deranged, he is in such a frenzy that he neither knows nor cares whither he is going,—Boniface is shaking his neck, and hauling at the bridle. Well done, rector, that gate was gallantly taken! It has ever been thy boast to ride well up to 'em.

"By all that's mortal, parson, don't gallop past the hounds and beat the fox!" shouts Sir Harry, "verily, Boniface has got on his back, the world, the flesh, and the devil! Hang him! look there,—he has ridden over Ranter, or 'tis—"

"Oh! he'll ride rough-shod over any

species of dissent—he'll care nothing about killing a Ranter," laughingly interrupted an equestrian hard by.

"Never was such a fellow," continued Sir Harry, "he'll gallop into that chalk pit—but *facilis descensus Averi*—." In his wrath, he had almost added the concluding syllable!

Away they go at a slashing pace, and in less than three minutes nothing in the way of horsemen is to be seen, and exceedingly little heard. Away they go, and after what, nobody has beheld anything except Rusticus, and Rusticus may have been mistaken? There's no mistake—in the process of time the unseen will be seen—the invisible become visible. Christopher North says, "It is an *Idea* that is pursued on a whirlwind of horses to a storm of canine music." An *Idea*, shade of John Wilson—but his reverence who is enthusiastically following it out, in the sure and certain hope of a speedy development, will tell you it is a very *good Idea*—one that ere long will be a practical, tangible, reality,—unlike to a number of chimerical airy, insubstantial imaginings, which men,

in all sorts of schemes and descriptions of projects, hunt after now a days—ere long the *Idea* will be realized in the shape of a four-footed, flesh and blood ocular demonstration.

There he is! 'Tis precisely two hours and fifty-five minutes "by the stop-watch, my lord," since the rustic shouted, and the canine organs of *ideality* were aroused—they are in upon him! Sir Harry has been gallantly carried on Crazy Brains, and ditto the Oxford Mixture, on Bonny. A few stragglers come up, and ere long the field are present. His reverence takes off his Theodore Beza, and with "snowy kerchief" wipes the perspiration from his bald head, which is as smooth as a pumpkin, and shines in the mid-day sun as if it had been subjected to a covering of copal varnish. Poor Bonny, he is in a state of intense physical exhaustion, his large thin nostrils are wildly distended at every heaving breath, to insufflate as much oxygen as possible, and from his wet working flanks, sweat, [as blood from the dying gladiator, is falling, "like the first big drops of a thunder shower!"

He returns home well pleased with his day, undergoes a thorough ablution, takes a tea-dinner (he has long been aware that too much of solids wont do after great bodily fatigue, that a heavy meal causes a restless night; he cannot account for the fact physiologically, but he knows it is so); yes, he takes a tea-dinner, then his half-bottle of bee's-wing, and dozes away a very considerable part of the evening, basking over a comfortable fire, and cushioned softly on the hide of poor old Shiver the Timbers!

During those intervening winter days when the hounds were not within reach, and when the lemon-and-whites, and the feather-legs were foot-sore, why, then he would mount, and just take a ride to the Uplands, or down to the Carrs, if it was dry or frosty, and invite Blue-cap and Barmaid to accompany him, as perchance *she* might be found on the fallow, or reposingly squatted under the shelter of some furze-bush. He had coursed on Marlborough Downs and Yorkshire Wolds, but the hares about Eller-ingay were as difficult to catch as Will-o'-

the-Wisps, and when they scoured away turning their grey hips to the sky, Blue-cap and Barmaid had generally enough to do to overtake them. It was pleasant though to have some object in riding out, and if he did not on each occasion ensure the *rôti*, or the stew on the morrow, a hallo! and a good gallop, were better than moping at home, and in palling listlessness acquiring the *blues*. Everything in its turn, that was the axiom which he acted up to; you can't feed on plum pudding every day, and the intervention of plainer fare confers a zest to the more seldom luxuries. A good course and a kill are not to be despised, and a good course without a kill is preferable to sitting at home, twirling your thumbs, and acquiring the green and yellow melancholy—at least so thought the rector of Elleringay; and then he had a sort of authority for killing the beast of the field, as St. Denis told Charlemagne, that the flesh of hunted animals was good for sick monks, and that their skins came in very usefully to bind their books.

Whenever a few guests were gathered

together at the parsonage, the curate was, of course, a unit in the numerical totality. If, ingenuous and simple-hearted man, he could not fluently discuss the topics conned over by bucolic squires, he was enabled to talk on more congenial subjects, and whenever the conversation did by any chance veer towards books and learning, he started off at a brisk pace. But it cannot be stated that the discussions frequently took such a dry turn, for the rural gentlemen in question had not very elevated souls; no minds that were "pregnant with intellectual fire." It was not their wont to soar into the regions of fancy, nor indulge in metaphysical speculations. Their topics were not on Titians, Rembrandts, and Raphaels; nor on the galleries of the Vatican or the Louvre, not on the breathing blocks of Bernini and Canova, nor of fancyings less tangible from the Iliad to Tam O'Shanter. If political matters were reviewed, illustration was not sought for in the past, and it was more than ten to one that the majority had never heard of the revolutions of Achaia, nor yet the speech of

Archidamus. They did not base arguments in favour of the law-makers from an appeal to the Justinian code, or to such by-gone questions as those which made the Gracchi divide on the agrarian laws. Indeed, it was even doubtful whether the rector himself remembered the names of the *Cabal*, or who was the first of the Trimmers; he knew, however, that his political colour was blue, that he hated yellow, all innovations, and so-called improvements. Had he been a baron at Merton, he would, as lustily as any there, have called out, *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*, and he was precisely the man to have opposed and scoffed at such modern phantasms as railways, electric telegraphs, and lucifer-matches; in truth he was, as he said, no half-and-half, milk-and-water person; and he might have added, that he was a red-hot, ultra, rabid Tory.

The talk of these gatherings rather went on towards natural history, such as horses and dogs, and foxes and pheasants, and so forth, on which specimens of the animal creation the bucolic squires could eloquently dilate, and Cuvier or Audubon might have

envied the correct knowledge which they had touching their *habitats* ; and there were certain others, even some of the migratory species, with whose peculiarities they were marvellously conversant.

Now the curate knew little or nothing either on the modes of sporting, or of the pursued in the sport—he rather had a taste for polemical disputation, and had he lived at the time we write this, he would have gloated over such vexed questions as have latterly, with no very creditable animus, been discussed by Gorhams and Henries of Exeter. This predilection on the part of the curate had, at one time, well-nigh proved detrimental to his interests. When dining at the parsonage a theological question promiscuously turned up, and he and the rector imperceptibly became pitted ; the curate was not without his leaven of human pride, and he manifestly had a desire to show off in the conquest of a disputant whom he knew full well that he could with facility overcome. The rector had, unfortunately become inflamed with wine,—he lost his temper, and

when he found his feet slip in the intellectual arena, he commenced in a rude manner to hurl unfair missiles at the head of his antagonist, which made the curate very irate, and even wince under the volunteered indignities. The latter followed up with very hard names, and very obtruse arguments, until his opponent was lost in the miz-maze of diction as well as ideas. The bucolic squires were highly amused; but the rector was run to ground, and he ended up by saying—

“Sir, I fought nine battles at Eton, and won eight—I challenged to scull any boy from Windsor-bridge to Surley. There was not a man who stepped across the *Quad* at Brazenose who could beat me at tennis; and I, sir—I was brought up at the foot of Gamaliel; and you, sir, are only a literate!”

The coadjutor in his spiritual offices was abashed, but he could not concatenate pugilism, sculling to Surley, and tennis, with the doctrine of transubstantiation which they had been discussing. This dispute had well-nigh terminated in their separation; how-

ever a little explanation, which can so very generally clear up misunderstandings, put matters straight, and it was agreed that on future occasions theological, and, indeed, all learned topics should be avoided ; and, as the rector apologized, the curate took the hint, and resolved to no more expose that ignorance which even Gamaliels might at times send forth to the world. He had, in the heat of discussion, and when personally attacked, made allusion to the Eastern proverb, that "the most noxious insects crawl to the summit of the highest towers ;" but he was sorry in his heart that he had so severely hit the man of Brazenose.

Now, there were three things of which the frost-bitten spinsters were particularly fond, whist, rum-punch, and divinity ; and he, henceforth determined, whenever a controversial fit seized him, to make a call on those ladies, and discuss baptismal regeneration, or predestination, subjects on which they were very fluent, and on which they would continue to argue from sun-rise to sun-set.

Long-continued friendships beget famili-

arity, and the merry joke is often and harmlessly indulged in.

Between the squire and parson juxta-residence and a reciprocity of feeling on most concerns had, by long continuance, built up a friendliness, which promised a structure never to be sapped.

Godfrey was aware that the rector never preached his own compositions, and many a bit of raillery he ventured to throw out on this fact. But what matter if the rector did not. In that little study of his, full of antiquated tomes, where the *arachnidæ* were year after year undisturbed, and on whose dusty table were a few volumes apparently more read than any others—such as a very venerable copy of a work exulting in large black and red letters on the very long title page, professing to treat on "*Y^e Sportis and Pastymes of y^e Englishe, and on y^e Arte of Venerie*," "*Somerville's Chase*," "*Fistiana*," the "*Oxford*" and "*Racing Calendars*," with two or three other, whose names we forget. Yes! in that little study, a huge blackened oak-chest on whose panels were roughly engraved acorns, and trees, and beasts, and flowers,

and each corner supported fantastically by a naked cupid, on whose rotund stomach and fat cheeks two centuries had worked no reductive change, had long occupied its position, and been the custody of moth-eaten treasures. It was choked full of sermons—many written by the uncle of the present incumbent, and many willed to him by very considerate clergy “ere they gave their enemies the slip for ever.”

Now, this chest contained such a goodly number that it would have been absolutely absurd and ridiculous in him to have written more. On particular occasions, it is true, he *reduced* one from some of the dusty books which he had merely to open; but he could read his late relation's hand very fluently, and when cuffed and collared, they did very well. Occasionally would Godfrey, when they chanced to meet in the Church-yard ere service began, quietly say, in the tone of Sir Roger de Coverley—“Well, parson, who preaches to-day—the Bishop of St. Asaph, Dr. South, or your deceased uncle?”

“My uncle this morning; my hearers

understand him better than prelatical preachers," laughingly would the rector reply.

If it were a stormy Sunday, or if from any like cause there was only a thin congregation, he made his uncle's discourse still more brief, by turning over two leaves instead of one, doubtless remembering the truth of the Father, "*Non effundas sermonem ubi non est auditus.*"

In this sketch of the rector of Elleringay, much may have been told that cannot be deemed commendatory to one entrusted with the discharge of spiritual functions. True! But amongst his many acknowledged failings he had many real virtues. There circled round that heart such a catholicity of open and generous feeling, that it extended to every one within his sphere. If it could not be said of him as of Berkeley, that he had "every virtue under heaven," there was an overflowing kindness in the natural man, which shone through his character, and was perceptible to any one, and these inherent qualities made even the severe censor soften down into forgiveness, and

review his failings with lenity. Though he might not, like Zaccheus, have given all his possessions to the needy, yet in disposition Harlewin or Leofric were not more charitable. Never had pining penury been known to depart from his door unrelieved,—never had the hand been withheld where want had solicited, and though he utterly detested pharasaical donation, yet there was not a cottage in Elleringay which could not testify to his custom of doing good by stealth. He was an eloquent proof of the poet's declaration that "none are all evil," an example that goodness and error may be mixed up with each other.

The self-righteous might flourish over him the scourge of indignant censure, and priestly railers denunciate his follies, but haply he had redeeming qualities which such accusers might not possess. It is the *system* that should be blamed and not the man; that condition of things by which the aforesaid uncle was enabled to transmit as an heirloom the spiritual charge over men's consciences. For the sacred office his reverence

was no more fitted than he was to sit in judgment in Westminster Hall, or be the leader of those rabid partizans who met in the Commons' House of Parliament.

Nature in her beneficence had endowed him with the attributes of well-developed muscles and rude health; but Nature is seldom lavish in her bounties, and she had not bestowed on him much cerebral power; to cultivate the earth, or pursue the beasts of the field, to be a skilful gunner, for such he was well fitted; but to teach the ignorant, explore the mysterious, to stand out as an intellectual guide—a moral beacon, and to “allure to brighter worlds and lead the way” for such he had no qualifications—no aspirations—no virtues. Had he been the kind of individual suited to the position he occupied—had he been a conscientious and an exemplary man, he might, in the midst of his little community, have been like Melchisedec—priest and king! He would then have been hailed with hearty welcome whenever, even under the humblest portal, he bent his anointed head!

Truth whispers the fact, that a mighty spirit of improvement has gone forth, and these days are days of enlightenment, and shadow out the gigantic forms of human advancement; men and manners, which in the tolerant spirit of the time, were passed over half a century ago, would now be scouted and cried down in shame. There may, in remote districts, be antiquated semblances of the original described, but they are rare and rapidly vanishing. In another generation it would be as vain to seek for a rector of Elleringay, as a pterodactyl clinging to the cathedral roof of Fingal's Cave, or to hunt for a Dodo on the plains of the Mauritius.

CHAPTER II.

"Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,
And sleep till earth herself shall be no more."

YOUNG'S "NIGHT THOUGHTS."

"How sleep the brave, who sinks to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest !

* * * *

There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay."

,

COLLINS.

"There rest, my son * * * the dream is fled.

* * * *

Where deep forgetfulness succeeds the roar
Of life, and fretting passions waste the heart no more !"

BOWLES.

HAD his reverence not interrupted us, we
were pursuing the smooth current of our

narrative at the hall, and had just put Godfrey to bed after a terrible fright from an apparition; we will, then, with the reader's permission, retrograde over the last few pages.

When the news of the great victory reached the rector, he very patriotically sent for Mr. Shears, and desired that gentleman instantler to get himself, and as many coadjutors as he chose, in readiness for a hearty, uninterrupted, ringing day. He also told Mr. Shears that the ringers would be regaled with as much old October and roast beef as they chose, he having issued emphatic orders that the kitchen should, for at least that day, be made an open house. Shears now felt his loyalty tingling to his finger-ends, and he quickly enlisted helpers in addition to the regular church-ringing staff. The bells commenced in very desperation, the only fear was, that they would be cracked to atoms; long years had passed away since such merry pealing had resounded from that belfry, and when the beef and ale began to take effect, the ringing enthusiasm, and the

patriotism, increased in multiple ratio. The music of the merry bells borne on the tranquil bosom of the summer air, was wafted far and wide; the ploughman stayed his team, the woodman ceased his resounding strokes, and the shepherd leaned upon his staff, to listen to the chiming peals, and wonder at the cause! The village housewife, the coy maiden, and querulous old age, hurried to the threshold of each humble dwelling, as it was not the king's birthday, nor fifth of November, and no banns had been published of many months, therefore it could not be a wedding!

Napoleon was beaten, and the English had conquered the French! Why, the news sped like wildfire, every cottage hearth rang with noisy joy, witch-like old women, who had recently declared the world was about to end, talked of wars and rumours of wars, and the more profound politicians amongst them, gave it out, as a matter of course, that King George would henceforth also sit on the throne of France; venerable denizens thanked God that they had lived to see the day when

Frenchmen were to be cut down like grass in the swathe—and children who had long crept betimes around the evening fire, now, no longer talked of squeezing themselves into mouse-holes, and equally out of the way and contracted apertures, if Buonaparte should come—the good news was hailed by every age and every station, with all the exuberance of overflowing gratitude and delight. The bells rang harder, and louder, and faster, and every face seemed inexplicably happy.

Soon was the rector pacing along towards the Hall, where he found the De Bohuns in a ferment, and every member of the domicile plunged into the heart and centre of the battle. Godfrey clutched the rector's hand, the rector giving unquestionable evidence of a person labouring under some powerful excitement, took off his Theodore Beza, and waved it long and lustily in marvellous joy. He had nurtured certain misgivings in his own breast as to whether his benefice were safe in the event of the French conquering—had just figured to his

fancy some tonsure-pated, Jesuitical sneak, located at the rectory; aye, and it was just possible to ensconce himself in the hide of his favourite, old Shiver-the-Timbers, possess himself of the cellar key, turn to the wilderness the lemon-and-whites, feather-legs, and liver-chesnuds, eat the dorkings and ducks, whilst the rightful possessor himself had been spitted by some demon-visaged cuirassier. Thank God it was not so, and such apprehensions were now idle.

"Glorious news, De Bohun," said the parson, after waving his Theodore, whilst well nigh out of breath. "I hope they'll draw and quarter the evil spirit who has so long disturbed the world's peace. May the renegade son of Belial fall into the hands of the Philistines and be smitten by the edge of the sword, is my hearty prayer. Yea, may he beg in blindness like Belisarius of old!"

Godfrey concurred in this charitable wish, and said something about flaying alive, and certain other refined modes of torture, to which the very sensitive and rather irate

follower of St. Stephen assented, and even declared that no ingeniously devised punishment could be too severe. When the ebullition of this first rapture of boisterous delight had in some measure subsided, his reverence made allusion to Moreton, and expressed a hope that the young soldier had passed through the glorious struggle unharmed. At the mention of his name Godfrey became agitated, and by-and-bye he told his friend of the ominous spectre which had left a weight upon his mid-day thoughts. The rector laughed heartily, and told his neighbour that he never before deemed him a superstitious old woman.

It can easily be imagined with what anxiety Godfrey now each morning looked out for Simon and the post-bag dangling at his side. Backwards and forwards along the avenue would he pace, first pulling out his watch, then looking towards the large gates at its extremity to catch a glimpse of the Corporal—trusty animal—who still continued to perform this journey to the Cross-roads Inn.

Not till the fifth day after the battle did the intelligence arrive. When the bag was opened a large letter, "*On His Majesty's Service*," was at length there to either dispel doubts or confirm fears. With trembling hand and palpitating heart did Godfrey break the seal of that momentous missive, whilst the family group in breathless silence gathered round. When his eyes beheld the fatal announcement, words cannot express the tragic scene which ensued! It was one of those domestic heart-quakes which for a time lays all prostrate, benighting every hope, shutting out every ray of consolation. Thus woman's tender affection death had robbed of an idolized boy; thus the holy endearments of fond sister's love, had lost for ever the object of so much solicitude; thus a father who had fondly reared in his fancy schemes of ambition and foresighted policy, was sternly told that the wisdom of this world is to him that planneth foolishness.

When the first paroxysm of grief had in some measure subsided, Mrs. De Bohun and her daughters, in that spirit of soothing kind-

ness and tender concern, so characteristic of the gentler sex, essayed by every means in their power to assuage the sorrows which had lacerated the father's heart. Every consolatory word, every affectionate argument, which such sensitive and devoted sympathies could suggest, were employed to mitigate his grief; but, alas! the appalling truth had made a cheerless midnight of his mind. Under this afflictive trial the rector was sent for, impressed by those peculiar feelings that affliction when divided is mitigated in its poignancy. He endeavoured to console the ladies, and reason with Godfrey—he truly observed, as the young soldier was no more a world could not restore him—that the indulgence in sorrow was vain as it was foolish—that the only thing remaining was to sum up as much moral fortitude as possible, remembering he had died in a good cause—that hundreds of families were overwhelmed in like distress, and that the wisest resolve would be to suffer the storm to pass away as quietly as such a loss would allow. He did not venture on pointing out any Scriptural

illustrations, which taught patience under suffering, or reminding them of those consoling truths which shed light and life into the heart of man, when sorrow and bereavement render this world a gloom and a void.

Captain de Bohun was unfortunately one of those individuals the worst fitted for the endurance of a calamity like this ; his previous life had been spent as a life which confers no moral discipline to the heart—as a life which is pursued by selfish and unreflecting men. His time had either been passed in useless torpitude, in the pursuit of vain objects or empty pleasures ; his employments had been as valueless as the amusements of Aeropus or Biantes ; he might have often sought occupation for his hours, so did Domitian in killing flies. An existence wasted in following the sports of the field, was a reproofing reflection to meditate upon when age, and bereavement, and other calamities were now darkening his hearth. Years thus devoted were now to come to his mental view like chastening spirits of the past, and wormwood was his portion in the

chalice, instead of the nectar of pleasure. Enlarged notions and generous sentiments he had not; subtlety and acuteness were rather the characteristics of the man. It is true he had not been guilty of flagrant errors, nor set a vicious example to others; he passed for a correct person in society, went regularly to church, punctually distributed beef and potatoes at Christmas, and passed current as a respectable man of the world. But this was a trial which proved the worthlessness of wordly knowledge and mere wordly reliance. Well had it been for him if he could have summoned to his heart those consolatory recollections that we can have no lasting peace, no permanency of happiness here, and that there is but one balm to really soothe the wounded spirit, and heal the broken heart. Well had it been for him if the silent upbraidings of conscience did not now add torture to an affliction in itself too prostrating. Melancholy thought—Moreton—the young, the brave, the generous Moreton—the handsome soldier—the heir of Elleringay—the last of

a long and honoured line, had been cut down as a flower in his pride—was now a clod of the valley. A stately oak of Bashan had fallen; the pitcher had been broken at the fountain!

In due course of time the stage waggon deposited at the Cross-roads Inn, an unusually large and heavy chest, addressed to Captain de Bohun. The worthy landlord and two or three others, who were required to lower this goodly sized package from the vehicle, were amazed at its weight, and exceedingly curious to know what it contained, and various speculations were made as to its contents, in that spirit of prying curiosity common to the dwellers in remote districts. That evening Simon and the Corporal conveyed it to Elleringay. Soon the truth was told. Opening it, poor Moreton—'twas the plain and substantial receptacle of thy perishing dust! A simple inscription told the brief tale of him whose remains the sanctity of friendship had forwarded, to be compounded with their kindred clay!

Three days subsequently the funeral took place. Bright and lovely was the morning all nature smiling as if in mockery at man, on which the mournful cortège slowly passed along the winding avenue to the village church. The body was born to its last resting place on the shoulders of these trusty domestics, who did now and had belonged to the family. The tenants showed their respect by joining in the procession, the young looked on in quietstare, the old lamented in unfeigned sorrow, not an eye in Elleringay had forgot to weep, and even the strong-minded rector, when he pronounced the solemn words, *Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust!* felt the fountain of his heart burst open, and his quick falling tears mingled with others that freely were flowing. The sable coffin lay lowered in that gloomy chamber where the fretting passions of the world can never come, where the weary cease from their labours, the once distracted in calmness repose; and all that remained of youth and god-like form, of vigorous arm and warrior step, the last of an honoured race, now slept with the ashes of his ancestors!

CHAPTER III.

"—That house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired;
Where village statesmen talk'd with look profound,
And news much older than their ale went round."

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

AUTUMNAL days were waxing to a close, the trees becoming leafless, and the pastures bare, when, one evening, the schoolmaster of Elleringay and Farmer Fallow were comfortably ensconced over the sea-coal fire at the Plough. The village dominie had been holding terse arguments on parliamentary measures, in which, by-the-bye, he was scarcely at all contradicted in his presages, and worthy Fallow had eloquently dilated

on crops and kine, when a startling rap was heard at the door, and in a few moments a stranger soiled with travel, and bearing in his hand a small carpet-bag, was before them.

"I hope, mistress," said he to the hostess who opened the door, "you can accommodate me with a bed to-night?"

The landlady did not on the instant vouchsafe a reply, as if, forsooth, she nurtured certain misgivings as to the desirableness of entertaining so strange a visitor at so late an hour. At length, however, after a more thorough scrutiny of his person, she answered in the affirmative, and the traveller, after depositing his carpet-bag in the window-sill, drew a chair to the fire, and by way of introduction to those already seated, he volunteered some trifling observation on the weather, bristled up his hair, rubbed his hands, and assumed an expression of homely good humour.

"'Tis a lonely walk for a stranger, and in the dark, from the De Bohun Arms to this village," observed the wayfarer after a short pause.

Farmer Fallow, whose eyes had been constantly fixed on the stranger since he entered, nodded assent, and the Gamaliel enunciated a monosyllabic affirmative, then vigorously puffed forth huge volumes of smoke, which writhed themselves into all possible contortions as they dissolvingly ascended.

"Having come a long journey, I shall be glad of some refreshment," said he to the landlady; "anything you chance to have in the house, I am not particular; a sharp appetite they say is the best sauce, and that I certainly happen to have."

Fallow gave a faint smile, and his companion at that precise moment puffed out such a cloud that his features were obscured, but it could just be seen that he faintly smiled too. In due course of time the repast was placed on the table, and it is but just to the traveller, in this relation to state, that he did ample justice to the viands before him. The two villagers ever and anon cast furtive glances at the stranger, and only wondered how a pale-faced person of his stomachic dimensions could possibly stow

away so much provender. Ere he had finished his supper, the trio were less reserved, the villagers became more communicative, and before long the conversation in no wise flagged. When the replete traveller turned his chair once more to the hearth, various topics were hit upon; he took up a six-days'-old newspaper, stained with beer and soiled with agricultural thumbs, and cast his eye on the parliamentary summary. Certain measures on the *tapis* were briefly discussed, and on his happening to observe that he was acquainted with the late Mr. Pitt, and call Sheridan in the familiar diminutive of "my friend, Old Sherry," the Elleringay-tonians stared, and almost fancied the gentleman in their presence some eccentric M.P., who was taking a tour for agricultural information.

"Depend upon it gentlemen," said he, "this country, after all, possesses more security and more happiness than any kingdom under the sun. Every man can respire the air of freedom, and sit under his own fig-tree in peace. Look at the laws of England; why, gentlemen,

they are of no mushroom growth, many of them descend from the Great Alfred himself, and they were moddled on the codes of antiquity. Our trial by jury, *habeas corpus* act, representative government, freedom of press, and a thousand other glorious advantages, conduce in no slight degree to make men naturally great, greater still. In what country, gentlemen, will you find a legislature so desirous of framing laws to suit the exigencies of every class? For some years I have had the honour of being connected with these legislative decisions, and I must confess the more I have studied recent enactments, the more I have been struck with the consummate wisdom in their framing. Recollect it is the unwearied endeavour of your representatives to pass laws containing the greatest possible amount of freedom compatible with the safety and independence of the country."

Farmer Fallow gave an asking look to his more learned friend the dominie as if to enquire what were his opinions of the stranger, who indeed talked so glibly on these matters, that he began to fancy they had the honour

of being in the presence of some great personage. A little self-interest creeping into the breast of worthy Fallow, he, in a deferential tone, asked the unknown what he thought relative to landed interest.

"Farming, my good man," replied the wayfarer patronizingly, as his acuteness at once perceived, that he was now regarded as an individual of some degree of importance; "farming, my good man, must in this country always be a staple occupation. England, recollect, is essentially an agricultural—corn growing, beef and mutton growing country, —and to the end of time the glebe will be tilled, and the valleys be pastured. They may, it is true, erect spinning-jennies, and blacken the air with polluting smoke, cotton lords may ape their betters, and so-called enterprise convert quiet respectable provincial towns into workshops and morally debasing factories; but depend upon it, Sir, the respectability and the reliance of this country are mainly based upon the broad shoulders of the British yeomen; that very peculiar class, Sir, which has not its analogy in any other

country, and which I may, without the fear of contradiction, affirm, has from the conquest on several occasions saved the high destiny of this country, and shown itself the most loyal, the most patriotic, and the most conservative of the interests of any class in the community.

“As to land itself it will always fetch its real value. There is a peculiar prejudice prevails in the minds of Englishmen in favour of becoming possessors of green fields. Broad acres won't fly away, and there's always something to look upon for your money; besides property so invested confers influence. A great landed proprietor is a greater entity than an equally great fundholder. An increasing population will always require feeding, and urban avarice delights to manifest its accumulations in rural estate. There is scarcely a city merchant, a rich banker, or hoarding burgher, who does not ever and anon indulge the glowing fancy of one day, when industry can cease from its labours, retiring to country quiet, and there pursuing the only natural occupation of man, the cultivation of the

earth—not mattering whether such be in amateur farming or the mere culture of his garden plot. Rightly did the Emperor of the North* when here exclaim that the man on earth who has the most of life's comforts within his grasp is the English country gentleman. Yes, land, as I have said, will always be valued, and highly *cæteris paribus* in this country."

"That science taught by Columella and Virgil to the Romans, will be ardently followed to all posterity," observed the schoolmaster, who had patiently listened to the stranger, and who was very anxious to show off a bit of classical lore, which by chance he had stumbled upon years before, and which he never failed to quote whenever the opportune occasion presented. Mr. Fallow had so frequently heard those gentlemen's names referred to by the learned man who sat in the corner, that they sounded in his ears like old friends, but he did not know in what county they farmed, nor yet whether they were landlords or tenants!

* Alexander of Russia.

The conversation on land, landed interest, and all that pertained to land was very interestingly kept up by all parties, so much so that the stranger insisted that his agreeable friends should join him in a bowl of punch. To this proposition the bucolic innocents good-naturedly assented, and the stranger with no slight air of importance ordered a smoking bowl of that generous compound. He declared, too, that it was long since he had fallen into such very agreeable company, and he averred again and again, that he wished he had been a farmer. Fallow shoved from him the empty tankard, and the schoolmaster re-filled his pipe. The punch at length was put on the board, rents and tithes, taxes and land valuing, were topics freely discussed, and under this stimulus the stranger elicited more and more information. Like all artless people who have not moved from a home-bred sphere, the villagers after a time grew exceedingly communicative not only respecting their own, but other's circumstances. A little more of worldliness might have suggested greater taciturnity. The trio were

so fond of each other's society that they did not separate till long after the village church clock tolled twelve. After a cordial shake of the hand, the aborigines bade a reluctant farewell to the stranger, whom they hoped to meet on a future occasion. Mr. Fallow gave it confidentially as his opinion to the knight of the ferula, that the gentleman whom they had the honour of conversing with was an M. P., incognito, to which his companion did not so readily assent, yet he did believe him to be a person of importance.

The stranger now moved off to bed much delighted at the evening he had spent, and in no wise regretting the punch for which he had to pay, well knowing that this disbursement was one of those expedient expenses hereafter to be refunded.

On the following morning the traveller rose betimes and peeped out of the lattice casement of the Plough. How still every thing and everybody appeared—it was the stillness of death. It is true the gabbling of the geese on the village pond, the occasional shrill clarion of some barn door *pater familias*, or

the bark of the impatient watch-dog, which "dragged his lengthening chain," broke the silence, but such discordancies were for an instant, and again not a noise interrupted.

Godfrey De Bohun was at this time, as the reader may suppose, full of trouble, often did he wander about for hours in the lonely walks, which environed his residence.

It was during one of these melancholy musings that the stranger who had slept at the Plough, accosted him. At the first the Captain did not recognize him, at length, however, he called the person to remembrance, nor did he seem a little agitated in the recognition.

"I have been at the house, captain, and a servant informed me I should meet with you in some of these very beautiful walks which surround your mansion."

Godfrey returned some trifling reply, and then bid the stranger accompany him to the Hall. He did so, and ere long they were both closeted in that dingy and jaundiced-hued study. The conversation was loud,

earnest, and for a considerable period continued. The family wondered what business could demand so tedious a council, and it was not till the expiration of two hours ere the stranger rose to depart. "Sir," said he to Godfrey, "the matter must inevitably come to a crisis—it cannot be longer deferred; to go on in this manner would be a *reductio ad absurdum*." Godfrey bade a formal good morning, and his visitor in a few moments was effecting his retreat down the avenue. Soon afterwards Farmer Fallow espied the M.P. with whom he had had the honour of revelling the night previous, hastily pacing along with his carpet-bag towards the Cross-roads Inn—and that individual was no other than Mr. Gabriel Gubbins.

The reader may probably remember that during Godfrey's last interview with his legal adviser, no one could be more polite and attentive; he was hospitable and witty, and veritally overflowing with friendliness. But certain circumstances since then had changed the complexion of Mr. Clincher's bearing towards his client. The solicitor had argued

within himself that with Captain De Bohun there was a great share of duplicity and pride. Whatever his professions were relative to the match between Letitia and his son, he did not believe there had been one single feeling of sincerity in the matter, and that, in truth, Godfrey had all the while been covertly opposed to any such thing. However, Moreton was no more, and the wished-for alliance impossible.

Mr. Clincher very considerably reflected that as he had client in his power—as he had despised his daughter, and as the young man was dead,—he would now requite him for his deception and the contemptuous manner in which he had treated Letitia and himself, therefore, as the prelude to more decisive operations, he dispatched Gabriel down to Elleringay with an account of the claims which he held against the estate. Gabriel was also entrusted with a discretionary power in talking over the matter, and was desired to order his replies according to the tone and temper of the client; and, above all, by some means to gain certain information respecting

the estate. The latter, as we have above related, he admirably managed over smoking punch at the Plough. The vindictive Clincher had fully made up his mind either to have the thousands he had advanced, which he feared were more than the property was worth, or at once to become possessed of it. He now determined to show no quarter to one who had looked down upon him and his, and from whose further friendship there could not be any advantage.

In the retrospect an individual may probably be called to mind who had no greater liking towards Godfrey than Mr. Clincher himself; this individual had on one occasion, met the squire of Elleringay and his son, and, not to mince the expression, he cordially hated them. This person was Jingles. The departed soldier had, on the occasion referred to given considerable uneasiness to Mr. Jingles by his marked attention to Miss Clincher; but Jingles, on anxiously looking over the casualties after the battle of Waterloo, thanked his stars that one who might, if he wished, have been a very

formidable rival in Letitia's affections, was honourably mentioned amongst the slain! That announcement had given him much increased satisfaction; his hopes of winning the heiress were cordially strengthened—he now followed up his suit—proposed, and was ultimately accepted.

Letitia's lover had had the *finesse* to produce an impression on the solicitor's mind that he was a man of good property, and, indeed, that he could make money on 'Change with wonderful facility. He contrived to bring to Mr. Clincher's ears the fact of one or two lucky transactions; to prevail on a person, to speak in superlative terms of his business habits, and many other recommendatory qualifications; Mr. Clincher was won over,—at last consented to give him his daughter to wife. The marriage speedily took place, Mr. Jingles congratulating himself on having made so good a speculation, Mr. Clincher that he had wedded his child to one of the most rising men on 'Change, and Letitia that she could marry a person superior to the penniless son of a poor country squire. Thus all parties

were so far satisfied ; the man-mountain and like acquaintance partook of the bridal cheer, and every day was a day of sunshine and pleasure.

CHAPTER IV.

"Gideon's actions, as they shined
Bright in the chambers of his mind!"

* * *

"—— Glorious prospects all around lie!
On Gideon's pages are ——
Surprising pictures rising."

DYER.

"I was unable to pay. * * * Appraised and
sold for less than half their value."

VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

"Hall of my sires a long-farewell!"

BYRON.

NOTWITHSTANDING a long and wearying
journey in the country, and the lateness of
the hour when he reached the metropolis,
Gabriel was on the following morning punc-

tually at his office. He was one of those hard, active little men, almost incapable of fatigue; and the changeless round of his unvarying occupation had, in the long lapse of years, created in him a kind of mechanical regularity. As surely as the neighbouring church clock chimed half-past nine, so surely was Mr. Gabriel Gubbins pacing the broad pathway of Lincoln's-Inn Fields, and as certainly as the same clock notified five, was he descending from the scenes of his labours, in happy forgetfulness of vellum and folios, and wending his way towards his attic home. When Mr. Clincher arrived, of course there was much to communicate, much to consider; the confidential clerk had been sent on an important mission, and weighty transactions pended on the business.

"Well, Gabriel," said Mr. Clincher, the moment he entered, "you've found your way home again?"

"Oh, yes! no fears on that question," returned Mr. Gubbins, with a self-complacent smile.

"You have been expeditious, however, I must confess," replied Mr. Clincher.

After this preliminary conversation, Gabriel detailed all particulars, spoke of his adroitness in turning up several questions of import over punch at the Plough, and recounted the pausing rejoinders which he had made to the puerile arguments of the client. He gave a very graphic description of the mansion, and spoke in raptures of the neighbourhood ; indeed, he very eagerly offered it as his private opinion, that if Mr. Clincher allowed such a chance of possessing a snug, ring-fence estate slip through his fingers, it was ten to one he would ever meet with such another opportunity. Gabriel advocated the method of instanter instituting proceedings, and, in default of payment, declaring a bill of sale. This would bring Godfrey to a bearing, and as there was very little probability of the client raising the money, the property might be taken at a fair valuation. If it were not worth the amount of loan and other claims, why then the alternative was obvious enough without any valuing or anything of the kind ; an amicable arrangement might be come to ; the entail had years be-

fore been debarred, and the transfer could with facility be effected. Mr. Clincher commended the very business view which Gabriel took of the matter, and really concurred with him in thinking such would be the most advisable mode of procedure. He resolved to take a brief time for deliberation, and then determined to speedily act according to his conclusions.

Jingles having now entered the family, and that gentleman having the repute of being one of the most acute men on 'Change, was by the father-in-law, consulted on this momentous question. Now Jingles owed Godfrey an old grudge—he never took wine with him when they had met, and scarcely ever noticed him at dinner-table, doubtless, as Jingles thought, through a spirit of jealousy, lest he should bear away the accomplished Letitia from his conceited son. Jingles was consulted—and Jingles urged the immediate institution of legal proceedings.

“Father,” said Jingles, very filially and very affectionately, “you have passed a life of unremitting industry in the *causes* of

others ; it is time you should desist from toil. You have acquired what industry and high character are sure, ultimately, to attain, an ample competence ; why go on moiling and working when you might now take life so pleasantly and comfortably ? That estate would be the very thing for you : it would give you an importance in the neighbourhood, and as you have often told me, you have sighed for a country life, and a freedom from city smoke, and city din ever since you can remember ; where could you settle in retirement more desirably ? Gardening and farming would be pleasing occupations ; nay, more, they would append ten years to your life !”

The father-in-law really considered this advice very reasonable, and very well wishing. Letitia gave her most urgent vote for her papa turning country squire, and she descanted on the luxury of a kitchen garden, the cucumbers for pickling, and the lots of fruit for preserving ! Really she went into rapturous excitement at the thoughts of her papa living in such a genteel place, and in the very heart and centre of so many good

things. What a delight it would be for her and Jingles to go and visit him there, and how many bright visions were in such proposition in perspective.

"But, my dears," said Gideon tenderly, to Mr. and Mrs. Jingles, "my only fear is, that after a life passed so long in active employment, I should feel the country dull and tiresome as soon as the novelty had worn off. Active minds, Jingles, active minds, feed upon themselves, and in such pabulum become fretful, if they have no rational object of pursuit—I mean objects of more weighty import than simple amusements and trifling pleasures."

"True—true," returned Jingles, with a visage that would fain seem wise as Thurlow's. "However, I would give up poring in those dreary chambers in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; law is a hard, dry, uninteresting occupation. You might try agriculture for a time. Sidney Smith says, every man consoles himself that he can farm a small property and drive a gig. If you really found you could not go on without some more

exciting matters to attend to, I think a plan *might* hereafter be devised to relieve the tedium of mental vacuity."

Clincher gave a pantomimic nod, indisputably symbolizing that his inner man coincided with the very wise, and very feeling observations of Mr. Jingles.

And what said Godfrey, or rather what felt Godfrey, subsequent to the departure of the pseudo M.P.? Pity, aye pity, so often dry-eyed and stony-breasted, could not have avoided kerchiefing her orbs had she known the crushing agonies of his bosom.

Surely in the loss of such a son, in the blasting of such long-cherished hopes, 'twas a scourge severe, an earth-cup bitter enough. Well might he mourn the past and dread the future—his day of disaster was presaged, as certainly as told the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast.

It would be redundancy of detail here to narrate the legal processes, which, in as quick succession as such processes could be executed, were brought to bear on the defenceless head of the client. These kind of par-

ticulars are not savoury aliment whereon to feed the curiosity of the many. Without delaying the unwelcome fact, suffice it to say that with more than wonted celerity the Elleringay estate was publicly offered for sales but the appointed day brought no purchasers whose offers came up to the reserve bid. Its disposal was inevitable, and a subsequent negotiation rendered it the property of Gideon Clincher. The modern Solon was now the possessor of a hoary mansion and fair fields. The future was full of promise, and his only hope was for length of days to enjoy that world on which his heart was fixed. With trembling hand Godfrey signed the fatal instrument, which conveyed for ever from him and his the lands which for centuries had been owned by those who had borne his name. De Bohuns and Elleringay were henceforth to be associations only held in remembrance, the last bond of union was snapped asunder, and the descendant of the Plantagenets must pass as a stranger from his once owned patrimonial possessions.

A man of failing fortunes, says Ovid, is

like a decaying column, which the more it breaks, the greater superincumbent weight will it have to sustain. Godfrey had divers reditors in addition to Clincher, who like Jack Falstaff's men in buckram, increased in number on the counting, but the sums were small. The sale of his property was the signal for their clamorous demands ; like hovering eagles they now descended, with the intent of voraciously clearing up the morsels which the legal talons might cast for their prey. The most unwarrantable epithets were employed in speaking of the unfortunate debtor, and in the vituperative spirit of malignant detraction, even his very virtues — virtues they once lauded — were construed into vices, and there seemed to be a merit in darkening his name.

In no great length of time Gabriel, accompanied by a burley personage, made another visit to the Plough. This time the little man assumed no covert character, nor did he deem it expedient to pay any particular attention to either Fallow or the school-master, who, according to their wont, visited

that hospitable hearth. Circumstances had altered cases. Fallow was or would be a tenant, and the other would be compelled to be subservient for patronage to the new squire. Gabriel and his professional companion had considerable business at the hall; they took an inventory of all the goods there contained, and ere long published a bill of sale. The family miseries thickened with every succeeding day, and the total overthrow of its fortunes now began to be really apparent.

There is no condition entirely divest of comfort; there are none so unhappy but find some kindlier hearts to sympathise. Whatever the rector's feelings might be, he had, as previously insisted upon, some real virtues. When the fates and the world seemed to ruthlessly turn against his neighbour and his friend, his own pitying heart overflowed with tenderness, and it was in his nature to extend the hand of friendly assistance. Yes, he declared that until some plan could be arranged, the De Bohuns should find a home beneath his own roof—that his house should be theirs.

"Captain," said his reverence, when the sale was announced, "make out a list of such articles as you wish to retain, and I will advance you the money with infinite pleasure." He did not say he would give it to him, knowing too well the tender feelings of a high-bred gentleman, but such was the polite way in which he conveyed his intimation of a donation.

It was indeed a heart-rending spectacle to witness the old hall after fixtures and furniture had been removed; every apartment breathed of desertion and loneliness. During the many generations of De Bohun's tenure no such catastrophe had befallen it. Those rooms lately enlivened by cheerful voices—those corridors which had echoed to boisterous juvenality had now been crowded by unfeeling visitants—the sacred hearths profaned by jeering strangers. When the inquisitive throng had departed, a mournful and melancholy silence brooded beneath that roof, and in every aspect a sombre tale was told. Few sights more deplorable could have been witnessed.

For ages plenty and prosperity had been within its walls: for ages hospitality and good cheer had been liberally dispensed. Centuries had hoarded its ivy-covered buttresses, and many a winter's storm it had withstood unmarred, but the day had now come when it presented the picture of piteous distress; even the most insensible felt some inward touches for the havock which had fallen on an ancient home—aye, on one of those homes, the abode of such comfort and the scene of such happiness of which England alone can boast. Tradition and history had cast a halo over its corroded turrets, and clothed its sharp gables with a romantic interest. Here the fifth Henry had led the dance on gala day—here Elizabeth and her lover Leicester had graced the plenteous board. The great Cecil's name still told the royal visit on the antiquated pane, and here the last of the Stuarts planted the spreading hawthorn, which yet blossoms on the emerald lawn. Without the De Bohuns, what would be the old hall, or Elleringay, or the Elleringaytonians! The associations of an ancient

race are not easily destroyed; human nature has a veneration for all that belongs to antiquity, and such as have reference to the past are ever more revered than the things of the present.

After much heart-burning, much argument, and many deliberations, it was determined that the unfortunate family should repair to Wales. Griffstaye was unoccupied, and it needed only trifling repairs to render it suitable for their reception. It is true it was a wild out-of-the-way part of the country, but it offered an asylum not to be despised, and with a moderate outlay it might be rendered tolerably comfortable. This little property, together with a small yearly income, had been settled on Mrs. De Bohun. After the disposal of Elleringay, a trifling residue remained, and thus, from one source and another, it was possible for the family, with rigid economy, to exist. It is true the change would be a most apparent one, but wisdom dictated that to husband their means with diligence, and live thereon, was now the only and wisest mode of procedure. There

is a tendency in our nature to give the rein to useless murmurings, and feed remembrance on bitter regrets ; but how vain—yea, vain as when the ancient lashed the Hellespont—futile as when the Thracians shot their arrows in the sky, menacing Jupiter because it thundered.

The day of departure at length arrived and it was indeed a day of bitterness. Godfrey's heart sickened at the thought of taking a last farewell of that spot of earth which he loved more than all the world beside. Mrs. De Bohun and their children endeavoured more heroically to bear against this hour of trial, and besought the stricken father to sum up, at least, the external appearance of fortitude. Farmer Fallow had kindly volunteered his team for the conveyance of their goods and chattels. He had been born and all his life lived on the estate, and his grandfather held tenure of the lands which he now cultivated—he felt a kind of kindred interest in the family, and, worthy man, he proved himself one of the few who remain unchanged by circumstances, faithful in adversity as in prosperity.

"Captain," said Fallow, as he brushed a tear from his bronze-hued cheek, "from my heart I regret your departure, but allow me the honour of tendering my little service in this, your time of trouble. During a long life I have received numberless kindnesses from you and yours. Though my rude tongue cannot word nicely-turned expressions, as I am a mere plain son of the soil, yet let me prove by any assistance I can offer, that I lack not in that high respect which your honoured name commands. Had the young squire been spared, you would have found in him the stay and consolation which age instinctively seeks from those of younger years. Like yourself, as you are aware, I once was blest with a boy; it pleased providence to snatch him from me, and now I till the glebe and drive my flocks and herds alone, yea, often with a heavy breast; but my sand of life, like your own, captain, will soon be run, and my grey hairs be laid in darkness for ever!"

Godfrey shook Fallow cordially by the hand, he appreciated the faithfulness of his

old tenant, and respected that composure and resignation which shed an evening calm over the rustic's soul—a calm which he inly envied. He could not converse, his heart was too full—he felt bowed to the earth.

Many were the calls at the rectory before the shielded family took leave of their native village. Several of the neighbouring gentry left their cards, and those who were on more familiar terms came to bid a cordial good bye. The curate was not wanting in his attentions, and virtuous-hearted man, he piously endeavoured to confer that comfort by which alone a real soothing to the wounded soul could be given. He conversed with Godfrey, and zealously essayed to prove that this trial was, indeed, a blessing and not a curse. The spinster sisters forgot not to evince their sympathy. The rector contemplated the sororal couple, wistfully insisted on their taking some hot negus, and they alternately laughed and cried in the midst of this strange scene so strangely presented beneath his roof.

It was proposed that at an early hour the

family should commence their long journey. They were astir betimes, and ere the sun had illumined the russet east all were in readiness. Poor old Simon had never gone to bed, throughout the night he had been bustling about in making one arrangement or another, and had effected no inconsiderable part in launching off the stout waggon of trusty Fallow, which had left the village as the clock struck twelve. The vehicles for the conveyance of the family were now placed in readiness, and even old Corporal and the jingling phaeton, both of which had been spared in the breaking up of the establishment, were awaiting the start. With the first light of the new-born day, the travellers silently sought their way through the quiet village, which yet scarcely sent up one smoky column to the fresh blue sky. The rumbling sounds of the carriages rose up many a drowsy denizen, who, from humble casement took a sorrowing look of, and breathed a parting benediction to the last of their ancient rulers. Never did holy father enunciate *pax vobiscum* more unfeign-

edly, never were warmer heart-wishes given from human lips.

Every house, every object as they passed, were lingeringly regarded as immemorial and now vanishing friends; they were wound round the memory from the first dawn of recollection, and a thousand happy associations crowded upon the recounting mind as the eye gazed upon them—and the heart took a reluctant farewell!

Having proceeded a short distance along the narrow green lanes, and gained a gentle eminence, whence was visible one of the loveliest rural scenes in England, Godfrey halted and turned to take one last look of his time-honoured home. The sun had now begun to climb the eastern sky, and tinge the thick foliage of many a forest king with liquid gold. The sharp gables of his patrimonial mansion were thrown out in clear relief from the thick elm trees in which it was navelled, and the glittering fane of that holy tower reflected, with shining brightness, the first beams of the just-risen day-god.

Agonizing glance ! Gaze on, Godfrey, if thou can'st through those blinding tears ; thou feelest some of that grief, of those riving pangs, which the first man felt, when with flaming brand expelled from Eden's bowers ; but console thy stricken soul, as of life's ills thou now hast known the worst. Proceed on the way of thy destiny ; and, in the words of Samson Agonistes, bear thy lot "with plain heroic magnitudo of mind."

He turned from the spot ; the carriages moved on, and Elleringay was lost to the sight.

CHAPTER V.

"The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,
Pants for the refuge of some rural shade,
Where all his long anxieties forgot
Amid the charms of a sequestered spot.

• • • • •

He may possess the joys he thinks he sees,
Lay his old age upon the lap of ease."

COWPER.

"The family resolve to hold up their heads."

Vicar of Wakefield.

"There is something in a name!"

Vulgar Adage.

It was one of those sunshiny mornings when even a large, smoke-clouded city looks laughing and cheerful, that Mr. Jingles,

without ceremony, opened the office-door and inquired of Gabriel Gubbins if his governor were in? The matrimonial alliance had made Mr. Jingles familiar, and consequently Gabriel vouchsafed a civil reply, which would not have been the case had he been an ordinary client, and had no such connecting link subsisted. The clerk replied in the affirmative. The son-in-law walked forward and gave a *ra-ta-tap* against the resonating panel of the door conducting to Gideon, and at the same time turned the handle. There he beheld his father-in-law enthroned upon the huge chair which for forty years he had occupied, literally half-suffocated with musty cobwebby deeds and dusty, very dusty documents. It is true that in a bright summer's morning this *scriptorium* had a less sedative effect upon the visitor's nerves than ordinary; there was a certain degree of lightsome cheeriness about it, and though everything appeared time-worn and faded and shabby, yet the iron staucheons did not look so prison-like, the aspect was less heart-achy, and if Mr.

Clincher of this time were compared with Mr. Clincher of the last time we described him there, it is indisputable that he had a less withering visage. Perhaps it was the July sun that lit that happy smile which danced on his flexible features, perhaps his soul was now in its communings with itself, delighted by some gratulatory thoughts. However, some dimpling merriness played upon the surface, whatever of good or ill might lurk below.

“’Pon my honour here you are again, *semper idem*—always at it—amongst those confounded vellums and parchments. I had nurtured the hope, now that you had become a large landed proprietor, and doubtless one of those days Deputy-Lieutenant and J.P. of the county of —, that you would no longer immure yourself in these horribly dim and dismal chambers,” observed Mr. Jingles, as he very affectionately put forth his hand and cordially grasped that of his new parent.

“Obliged to set things square, my dear Jingles; must settle a few matters before

retiring, my good fellow," returned Gideon, in honied accents.

"Well, 'tis, I dare say, to the benefit of society in general that tastes differ, but for my 'own part, I could no more submit to such drudgery than I could have patience to count every hair on the Lord Chancellor's wig. I must make a little money in a more facile and expeditious manner. What will you say when I tell you that by a single transaction yesterday I cleared two hundred and seventeen pounds nineteen shillings and fourpence three farthings? On 'Change we make it a little faster and more comfortably than you legal gentlemen," continued Jingles, with a self-complacent smile; then giggling "he—he—he—he," and running his fingers through his thick flowing tresses.

Gideon held up his head in manifest consternation; he took from his nose his spectacles, and heartily rubbed them with the corner of a huge silk pocket handkerchief. Having performed this little operation, he re-adjusted the lunettes, and rolling up the said kerchief into globular dimensions, dex-

terously threw it into his hat, where he always carried that necessary article, considering it there in safer custody than in either of his capacious pockets. How very fortunate, thought Mr. Clincher, Letitia had been in making such a selection.

"Well, I suppose you have heard nothing respecting that old fox and his cubs?" said Mr. Jingles," after a few moments' pause.

"Nothing whatever," answered the solicitor.

"I fancy he would require a tolerable amount of rooting out; be difficult to force from his hold," laughingly continued the younger.

"He was very averse to leaving, I believe, but my terriers dogged him from his earth," said Mr. Clincher, somewhat facetiously.

"I trust he'll ere long become partial to his Welch *seat*, and find much consolation in mountain mutton and the pure air of that romantic hill country. Probably he is fond of scenery and loves retirement, and if so the change will prove agreeable," sarcastically observed the son-in-law.

"For my part, I care very little about him

or his. I hope, however, I may never set my eyes upon him again; he is a haughty, broken-down old jackass, for ever boasting about his family, and ingloriously dwelling upon the merits of his ancestors. Those seven daughters may now turn Welch milk-maids, and, in compliance with the fashion of the Principality, wear up his old hats. Who'll have them, I should like to know, such proud, penniless unfortunates. Sensible men wont stultify themselves by marrying such prizes!"

When Gideon thus delivered himself, it was indisputable that he was irate, and that the recollection of the De Bohuns stirred up the bile in his blood. He never forgot how Godfrey had spurned his daughter for his son, and he verily believed what a sinister game the old squire had played in that proposal for an alliance. Mr. Clincher truly spoke from his feelings when he declared he cared little pertaining to the late proprietor of Elleringay and his family. He recked as little for his mischances as he did for the cage of Bajazet or the victories of Tamerlane.

The obsequious son-in-law laughed very heartily at the witticisms of his father-in-law. He then nictated his left eye in a familiar wink, and archly observed, "daughters do not so easily find husbands, that good matches are not met with at any turn, and they who meet with clever and sensible men are fortunate in these times." Perhaps in the sly depth of Mr. Jingles' insinuations something of a *double entendre* was here given.

It may suffice to inform the reader that after a long conversation on the part of Mr. Jingles, it was definitely agreed that the Jinglesees should leave London, and take up their permanent abode with the new proprietor of Elleringay Manor. The city-merchant declared he would decline a great portion of his present business, and henceforth confine himself to private speculations, which matters could very well be transacted by letter, and a monthly visit to the metropolis. The solicitor quite agreed with him, and, in under-toned accents, muttered something about his inheriting an ample income

without business. Without delay orders were issued for the speedy repair and furnishing of their mansion. The trio were continually talking of the new prospects and new life about to be entered upon, and much happiness seemed unquestionably in store.

Mr. Gabriel Gubbins now deemed it expedient to imitate the example of his respected employer; and he vowed within himself that he would retire too. Years of toil and patient assiduity had rewarded him with a competence amply sufficient for his moderate wants, and why not now, ere age had set its hand too sternly on his brow, rest from his labours? When he reflected on the ease and comfort consequent on a withdrawal from his vocation, he at once panted to flee away and cultivate his mignonette and geraniums in country calm. It was, we repeat, a glorious thought to Gabriel to lay down his pen, and find tranquility beyond the lowering smoke and noisy din of that bewildering city in which he had passed the entirety of his life.

His *governor* made to him a *free gift* of all

printed books, fixtures, and furniture at the offices, and these Gabriel very expeditiously converted into a certain number of pounds sterling. After all it was not without a sigh that Mr. Gubbins tore himself from the sombre rooms in which he had passed more than half his existence. The very high-legged stool on which he sat, and which had become worn and polished by years of friction from his nether man, was regarded as an old friend; the silent companions in the way of chairs, pictures, and desks, on which his bodily eye had gazed for many a bygone year, were now parted with reluctantly. But however inconsistent it may seem, a sort of attachment may spring up for things that are dumb and things inanimate.

It was decided that Gabriel should, with all necessary expedition, be despatched to Elleringay, in order to superintend the improvements, and make all in readiness for the new family. This was an occupation that well accorded with his tastes, because it vested in his hands a little power, and

because it was his peculiar liking to issue commands to and instruct others. He, of course, took up his residence at the village inn, and though he was *not* deemed an incognito M.P., yet by the airs he assumed, and the large words to which he gave utterance, a sort of respect was conceded. He did not fail to impress the credulous villagers with the great wealth and importance of the new squire; but unfortunately a prejudice already existed against the new proprietor, and his conduct towards the De Bohuns had, for its baseness, been magnified, and shaded of darker hue, than even the facts had warranted. When the Jedediah Cleishbotham took, as usual, his seat in the ingle, when worthy Fallow came according to his wont to regale himself at even, and when other of those artless denizens assembled at the Plough, a fine field was presented for Mr. Gubbins to expatiate on the virtues, the influence, the dignity of those great London families, the Clinchers and the Jinglese. But, alas! all he said was coldly received, the dominie smoked his pipe; as Gabriel

vauntingly went on, he gave an ironical "ahem!" and looked in fixity at Fallow, whose huge, fat features were gathered into a withering scorn. Yes—honest Fallow recollected the unpleasant mistake into which he had fallen in a previous conjecture as to the standing and character of Mr. Gubbins, and the learned man in the corner, though he had not the candour to confess his error, did on the occasion referred to, in some measure, echo the sentiments of his friend and neighbour.

The Londoner conceived it his prerogative to be the chief spokesman in those evening assemblies, and he detailed one marvellous story after another in such continuous volubility, that scarcely any one was heard but himself. Now the schoolmaster did not relish such loquaciousness on the part of a stranger, and though he did not give credence to one half he said, yet he feared to throw down the gauntlet of contradiction. Gabriel had signally defeated him on one occasion, and he wisely refrained from again entering the lists to be vanquished, well knowing that

by each successive victory he would be lowering himself in learned estimation on the part of those over whom he had so long reigned with undisputed sway, and who until now had looked up to him as a prodigy of knowledge.

Mr. Gubbins on several occasions insisted that every foaming tankard during the evening should be at his expense, and during his sojourn there it happening to be Squire Clincher's natal day, that night was one which gave an open house to the Plough. This generosity at length began to win over partizans, and certain of those "frugal swains" began to veer round to the conclusion that the new proprietor of the hall might prove a better man than the world had reported; and when Gabriel dwelt on the beauty and charity of Mrs. Jingles, of the vast riches of her father, and the generosity of her husband, reflection whispered that it might be policy to treat the fresh folks with respect. The Gamaliel and Fallow, though each might have desired to speak out in sympathy for the old family,

and in detestation of the new, were, as well as some others, tongue-tied by the consideration of self-preservation, and they wisely resolved at least to be silent. Time, thought they, would prove the virtues of the stranger magnates.

The alterations and plannings, the painting and papering, the additions and alterations, were carried on with such vigour, that the old hall in a few short weeks became as unlike itself as self can be made unlike. The dark oaken panels shone in their fresh varnish, every door was opened by a new latch or a different handle, marble chimney-pieces had usurped the places of their antiquated predecessors, the walls were hung with costly papers, and flowing draperies, pendant from decorated fastenings, made the substantially framed windows appear anything but what they were in the days of yore. Ere long loads of costly furniture arrived, such shining chairs and tables!—and such mirrors!—and then those costly pictures, the Gaspar Poussins, Velasquezes, Murillos, and Vandycks, how all these be-

spoke the truth of the great man's riches and power, and who could deny that such affluence brought into their cottage-homed hamlet, there to be neighboured by poverty and scarceness, would bring with it an envied blessing?

In the gardens, the shrubberies, the pleasure grounds, the park, trees were felled, new walks wound through secluded tracts, and that restless spirit of improvement which walked through dry places and everywhere, but stayed nowhere, left in every aspect unequivocal symptoms of its presence. That verdant lawn where the green turf thickly grew up to the drawing-room windows, had been so closely shaven, and rolled, and swept, that it looked as smooth and beautiful as a broad web of Genoa velvet; those broken statues which had so long disfigured it were in better taste, succeeded by colossal urns, over whose edges the graceful tendrils of choice creepers were trained; the gravel walks had been so rounded and improved, that the most delicate foot of *ladye fair* might perambulate them in all sorts of

weather; the green-house and the vinery had not one cracked pane, and rare exotics now bloomed there in the nicely regulated temperature of the tropics. The main entrance gates looked smart and gladsome in their fresh coat of paint, and the armorial bearings—the huge De Bohun *fleur de lis* placed on either pillar, and which had been there long anterior to the memory of men still living, had been taken down, ruthlessly destroyed, and two rampant lions which Mr. Jingles had imagined were the symbols of his house, now gazed on each other in savage mood, as the sleepless guardians of the portal!

Mr. Jingles boastingly said, that as his own fortune was even more ample than his father-in-law's, the place ought to be fitted up regardless of expense. They were now about to settle as a county family, and appearances had to be considered as well as position. He prided himself that he was a man of taste, and it was his intention to demonstrate to the unrefined county squires by whom he was neighboured, certain of his

more accomplished notions, as he declared from all he observed in that part of the country, that nothing beyond a patriarchal simplicity was to be witnessed. To come out with something of a dash, he conceived, would place him in envied relief, as contrasted with such bucolic coarseness, and such rural ignorance as everywhere pervaded. The furniture and equipage were to be patterns of the genteel, and with the very cut of his coat he was not heedless, well-knowing that all he wore, or did, or said, were sure to be nicely scanned and very probably copied. In the course of time the mansion was in readiness, and Gabriel took no modicum of credit for appearances to himself—he had been director of the works, and the assembled rustics at the Plough had flattered him on the possession of his tastes, in nothing short of superlative encomiums.

'Twas one evening when Mr. and Mrs. Jingles were comfortably talking the twilight shades away in their snug sitting-room in London, and, of course, the all-absorbing topic of conversation at this time was relative

to their country seat, that the fertile brain of Mr. Jingles hit upon a happy thought.

"My dear Letitia," said Mr. Jingles, to his wife, "my name is not a very aristocratic one, and with sarcastic and ill-natured persons an attempt might be made to turn it and us into ridicule. To-morrow—yes, to-morrow, I'll go to the genealogists, as I have a slight impression that a correction might be made."

"'Tis a common but true observation, that there's something in a name," replied Mrs. Jingles. "I have repeatedly asked papa to spell his differently. He made some foolish objection as to the legality to doing so; you see 'tis one of his prejudices to drag *law* into all the thoughts and actions of his life. As if forsooth the mere orthography of his name could have anything to do with his interests—I mean by rendering it a little more uncommon and genteel. Why, Smith, the tallow-chandler, who for half his life lived the very next door to us, and who has now retired and gone to the country, has altered his to *Smythe*; the Misses Brown, the butcher's daughters,

with whom I went to school, now always put an *e* to the end of their signature, notwithstanding their father stoutly protests against it, and declares he will not add the final letter; and the Taylors, of whom you often heard me speak, who have recently purchased a *place* in Hampshire, have changed theirs, and very properly, to *Taylour*. Surely if such folks as I have instanced are warranted in the introduction of more respectable notions, Papa, who is as well-known in London as the statue at Charing-Cross, or Aldgate Pump, who, as every one says, ought to have sat on the woolsack and wore ermine, surely he is justified in the adoption of measures redounding to the higher standing and respectability of him and his!" concluded Mrs. Jingles, in more than wonted energy of tone.

"Yes—yes, you are perfectly right, my dearest—perfectly right!" replied her husband; "we are and we shall be different people from any Smiths, Browns, or Taylors, and shall occupy a very different position. Your father is a member of one of the

noblest of professions, speaking in a purely philanthropic point of view, a man of extensive learning, and as you have truly observed, of metropolitan importance—is known to every one. Any resolve that he might come to in the way of an orthographical alteration would be regarded very unlike the vulgar whims of the every-day persons you have mentioned. But pray what is the change you urged, my dearest Letitia?" said the incomparable Mr. Jingles, very vigorously.

"Well, my love," returned Mrs. Jingles, "I ruminated over the matter, and ultimately came to the decision that it might very consistently be spelt *Clynchiere*, which would look very neat and very genteel, and," added she after a slight reflective pause, "very uncommon,—indeed Frenchified."

"A most judicious and ingenious change, and thus, either in autograph or print it would equal the patronymic of any country squire in the county of —— I'll wager a rump and dozen on it," replied her husband, slapping his hand upon his thigh and jumping up from his chair.

"I'll teaze pa' into it, I'll pass my word I will, though I have never mooted the question since I left school, and then I recollect I had a long cry when on my return home I told him how the girls had pestered me, and he would not change the spelling of it."

"Yes, in his weaker hour, when you have pleased him with the dance or the song, and when he, like Herod, is disposed to give you half his kingdom, sue for the favour," returned Jingles.

"I will—I will," said she, triumphantly.

On the following morning Mr. Jingles fulfilled his promise, and paid his visit and fee to the genealogist. One huge and antiquated volume after another were lugged from the shelf, and rows of names carefully read over, but, unfortunately, by some unaccountable mistake, neither the names of Clincher or Jingles could be discovered. This was indeed an omission much to be lamented. To settle down as a county family without armorial bearings, the thing was absurd. What was to be done in this dilemma? Mr. Jingles

had stuck up the rampant lions as the guardians of the entrance gates, under some dreamy impressions that animals of a lionine nature symbolled his house. To take them down again, and substitute a couple of serpent-devouring griffins, wiverns, mailed militants, or any other fierce and fiery animals of earth or sky, would be but exposing the family to derision, and casting some doubts on their having any *bearings* at all. He appealed to the genealogist, and in supplication besought him to exert his most earnest endeavours in agreeably settling this matter, and, in departing words, sincerely hoped the lions might be kept up. He promised to call in a few days' time, after more hoary records and greater heraldic researches had been made. It is but truth to say that Mr. Jingles felt a little crest-fallen, and on returning to other *arms*—the arms of Letitia, the wife of his bosom, who failed not to note that a cloud sat on his brow—he did not, however, communicate the humiliating annoyance which had for a moment dashed his pride and restrained that vivacious hilarity

so common to his character; but like most men who feed on that flattering pabulum—hope—he looked to a more favourable *finalé*.

At his next visit the herald greeted him with a merry smile; after considerable learned research, he had succeeded in proving that the name of Jingles was a mere corruption—a vulgarism of the very respectable and ancient Scotch family name, *Inglis*, and that the Jinglesees, of Shropshire, (from whence came this Jingles) were a branch of that renowned house who had migrated into England, and settled at Shrewsbury in the earlier part of the seventeenth century, and consequently Mr. Jingles was fully authorized in assuming the name and escutcheon of the elder branch of Inglis, debarring a quartering which in a successive generation had been introduced consequent upon a matrimonial alliance.

Mr. Jingles (we beg his pardon) *Mr. Inglis*, was verily delighted; he felt the blood tingling at his ear tips, he rapidly began to inflate with family pride, and truly a cubit was added to his stature!

“You see, sir,” said the cunning old heraldic purveyor, “you see, sir,” repeated

he, searchingly peering into the lit-up visage of his credulous and vain client, "that the Scotch names—at least, some of them—are oddly pronounced—I mean differently from the manner in which they are spelt. To wit, McLeod as if it were *Ma cloud*, Dalziel, by merely sounding the initial and final letters as if the word were eviscerated thus, D—l, and, with regard to your own patronymic, it is commonly pronounced Ingles, and thus, by the mere prefixure of a J, you then have the corrupted Jingles!

These explanations were exceedingly satisfactory to the about-to-be country gentleman, he brightened up, and inwardly thanked society that patronage had been given to such a useful study as genealogy; indeed, he ranked it before geology, palæontology, and even *gammonology*, or any other of the *ologies* now so commonly studied; because it had the power of adding lustre and standing to those who meritoriously gain the ascendant, and was consequently an important department of human knowledge. It was consoling to reflect, that at the time spoken of one of the

most respectable houses in the city was Inglis, Ellice, and Co., and who would know otherwise than that he was connected with that great firm, and when he could now cite his Salopian ancestors, surely such distinguishing advantages would more than overbalance those of obscure country gentlemen whose names and influence were unknown, and unfelt beyond the confines of one-third of their shire! Yes, when he went down amongst them, he determined on making frequent allusion to that great metropolitan house of Inglis, Ellice, and Co., and also on informing them that his forefathers had held estates in Shropshire for more two hundred years! After a slight pause, he broke silence, and said—

“But what of the lions? I hope you have saved them?”

“In that particular I have been also successful; they came into your shield anterior to the immigration of your Salopian ancestry, and since that time have been entered on the heraldic records. I think you said they were semi-lions rampant?”

"I beg your pardon, but I scarcely comprehend the nomenclature of your learned science?"

"Well, I mean," replied the genealogist, "that the effigies of the animals are truncated thus." The expounder of the science, to illustrate his meaning, quickly made himself understood by sketching the true emblem of the Inglis house on the back of a card, which showed a rampant lion with tail erect, wanting the hind quarters. It having so happened that the leonine beasts erected on the gate posts at Elleringay were untruncated, therefore slightly disagreeing with the heraldic illustrations. This was a difficulty easily got over, and the genealogist suggested the superaddition of a little brick-work and cement, which would happily cut off the redundant parts of the ferocious pieces of sculpture, and make them coincide with the huge tome of heraldic devices which lay on the table. "Your motto is an aristocratic and happy one," added the genealogist, '*Nobilis est ira leonis*'—how applicable!"

"Now that I remember, there was some

inscription beneath those *fleur-de-lis*: of course it had constituted the sentence on the De Bohun shield."

"*Nec parvis sisto*," quickly replied the armorial vendor, as if, forsooth, he had at his fingers' ends every particular that pertained from the Vere de Veres to the last baron. "Yes, that is De Bohun's," continued he, quickly opening the book, and giving ocular proof of the statement.

"The inscription shall of course be placed on the edge of the entablature—of course it shall," returned Mr. Inglis, with an air of importance.

In the process of time an armorial escutcheon was prepared for Mr. Inglis that might have sufficed had he been risen to the peerage. It was composed of showy elements, and we fear the herald manufacturer had taken the liberty of superadding certain features, to render it more likely to meet the approbation of the vainglorious applicant. This accommodating person intimated that, in consideration of an ample fee, he doubted not that he might be enabled to confer as

honourable lustre on the name of Clincher. This was matter for future consideration—Clincher had no ambition of that kind, and Mr. Inglis personally heeded not with regard to his father-in-law; yet it was true that his wife was exceedingly anxious to add the tincture of gentility to the name of her parent also. The panels of the flaming yellow chariot just completed at Long Acre, were emblazoned with the ancestral device of the time-honoured house of Inglis, and every article of plate (now all new, the old having been exchanged), from the large salver, and massive tea and coffee-pots, down to the very salt-spoons, was engraven in the form and semblance of savage lions, accompanied by the appalling war-cry of the house, "*Nobilis est ira leonis!*"

Mankind by nature are prone to murmurings, seldom do we behold them satisfied with their present condition, some faded joys, some bright visions of the past, are deplored, some fancied good is pictured in the future. Were it possible that the days which have been could return, what disap-

pointment would their restitution bring;—things that in the distance look fair, would appear less lovely when neared, and those imperfections which are remembered over the vista of years, would then come more prominently into view. Again, as to the future, it is by Fancy visioned forth in all the purpling hues which soften the remote mountain sides, but which also hide briery paths and flinty roads, that surprise the worldly pilgrim as he wanders on!

There is in this characteristic of the human mind a shadowing forth of its ethereal essence, an indication of its immortality. This unquiet restlessness, this dissatisfaction with the things of earth, this longing after something which here we have not, this constant searching after happiness, spring from some soul-impressed notion, some inwardly-dim reminiscence of the perfect and the eternal! Man hath, it is incontestible from but a casual survey of his moral nature, interwoven with his being something of the divine and incomprehensible—something of the infinite united to the finite, which will

for ever prove that in him is breathed the breath of intelligence, and render his sentiments, his qualities, a theme for contemplation and wonder, though never to be fully understood. His soul, like unto the material world by which he is surrounded, is throughout his existence making a progress towards evil or towards good—his essential attributes are progressive, and ever culminating towards some attractive point: it is neither his mission nor inclination to stand still.

Mark the myriad throng; project and hope are leading them on, and whether *ignis fatuus* gleams of folly, stern realities, or whatever stimulus it may be that urges them forward, it is not with the present that these fretting passions have their chief reference—a day-dream allures them, the great desideratum is not yet within the grasp, they are seeking that which is still to be found. Without these motive principles, these latent desires, these inexplicable impulses, the moral world would stagnate, and those gradually developing attainments of reason would bring forth no fruition for our welfare

here, none of those blessings which our faculties require, and which are placed within our command. A supine contentment, an apathetic heedlessness, pervading the social system of any community, must needs at once oppose happiness and virtue; it is not in the nature of things that mind or matter be stationary and unchanged—*omnia mutantur*; were a perpetual calm to brood over vegetable life, disorganization would necessarily ensue, chaotic disorder result. It is then the inalienable, the essential quality of the human mind, to be constantly craving after that which is not possessed, to essay towards treading some oasis of life, which moves onward as we advance, to sigh after an imagined happiness, which for all-wise purposes doth not exist in this mysterious state of our being.

We have been led into this brief reflection from a contemplation in the character of Mr. Gideon Clincher. Forty years long had he toiled for his generation at his desk, with the hope of one day resting from his labours. His progress had been the one never retro-

grading—every thought had been directed towards that envied prize, wealth: and it was won. It now remained to show whether it would realize his long-cherished expectations.

To enter upon a new theatre of life when the sand of existence is well nigh run, is frequently to break down in the character represented, and be held in derision by the audience. The vanity of age is less excusable than the folly of youth. Years are expected to confer the lessons of wisdom, and he who is not prudent with grey hairs, must have a weak head or a wrong heart.

CHAPTER VI.

"Now hey for Down Hall!—
The chariot was mounted, the horses did trot."

PRIOR.

"'Tis done—he steps into the welcome chaise,
Lolls at his ease; he hired four handsome bays,
That whirl away from business ——"

COWPER.

"Into an old inn did this equipage roll—
* * * * *

And thus with great friendship and glee they went on
To find out the place you shall hear of anon."

PRIOR.

"Here let me ever dwell
From cares, from business."

LANSDOWNE.

BRIGHT was that long-wished-for morning,
on which the trio with nimble foot stepped

into the handsome chariot which was to convey them to their country seat, but not brighter than the heart of each which now veritably bounded with delight. Like the daughter of Herodias, Mrs. Inglis had triumphed over the foolish prejudices of her parent, and henceforth it was decreed that all letters, parcels, packages, or any such thing should be addressed to Gideon Clynciere, Esq., Elleringay Manor.

No precautions had been omitted in order that the new family might enter upon their territorial possessions in a manner compatible with their standing; indeed it was resolved to do so with some degree of *éclat*, and they *ab initio* resolved to hold up their heads. Their journey, by prior arrangement, was to be performed by easy and comfortable stages, and to prevent the inconvenient chance of entering the village in the dark, it was agreed that they should travel slowly, and sleep one night on the road. That worldliness of which Mr. Inglis ever boasted, gave the suggestion that much depended on first impressions. He

deemed it expedient that the yellow chariot should aristocratically roll into Elleringay in the full fair light of broad and open day, as he inwardly felt convinced their dashing equipage would carry with it considerable respect. It may be Mr. Inglis over-rated the influence of the yellow carriage; but it being the first time he had ever sat in such a vehicle, it is tenable to suppose he would take a magnified view of its splendour and effects.

Before that giant monster steam, which now threatens to revolutionize everything and everybody, had destroyed all those old-fashioned and pleasurable associations connected with English travelling, it was pleasant as well as dignified to leisurely post from one stage to another. In those days there was a greater amount of independence, and more distinguishment in the movement in the upper classes. What happy and commodious homes for weary way-farers were those great hostleries, which at convenient intervals invitingly stood by the way side of every main road in the kingdom.

How the travellers' eye was gladdened as they rose looming on the sight, and what luxuries and hospitalities were obtainable within !—The spacious stone-paved entrance hall, long passages, suites of rooms, post-boys booted and spurred, and horses saddled, always ready by night as well as by day—the loungers about the front door, and whenever a coach or a carriage drew up, how the anxious group assembled to have a word with burly, broad-backed, good-natured guard, whose scarlet coat at half a mile distant proclaimed the royal mail—or to feast their eyes upon a living lord. How all these are imaged to the memory, and we exclaim such belonged to days gone by ! aye, and we would almost give for them in return all the advantages of locomotives and telegraphs, with all their hissing and smoke, and lightning communications.

To now visit some of the once busy and fashionable provincial towns, the sombre feelings of a regretful melancholy are unavoidably produced. Loneliness and desolation breathe over those ancient places the

breath of degeneracy and decline. The streets are less lively than of yore, the rough pavements seldom now rattle the capacious vehicles of the rural aristocracy, the shops present little semblance of vitality, and the great inns once exulting in the cognomens of Royal Georges, Crowns, Kings' Heads, and so forth, have under the humiliating influence of steam, been converted into shops, manufactories, or private domiciles. The time-and-space-devouring train whirls every body past as if every body were going to the metropolis, or to some Manchester or Liverpool, which in the spirit of commercial enterprise and lucre-loving worship have sprung into gigantic importance, out-distancing by all comparison those previously genteel provincial capitals, where now the grass grows in their once favoured places, and which are as antiquated and as much out of vogue as any obscure country squire in his buckskins, frilled shirt, and knotted quieu.

To return to the yellow chariot and the charioteers. After divers changes the

carriage in question rolled up to the front door of one of those great postal establishments described. Mr. Clynciere, and Mr. and Mrs. Inglis in dignified manner alighted, and were by obsequious attendants conducted into a large old-fashioned sitting-room, whose walls were decorated with discoloured engravings and dusky paintings. The capacious chairs, high fender, and various articles of oaken furniture, bespoke the apparent fact, that for many long years that apartment had presented the same substantial and quaint looking aspect, and haply there the grandsires of that travelling generation had occupied that room in its precise condition. After a considerable amount of deliberation dinner was ordered, and Mr. Inglis did not fail to give evidence of their standing by asking for dishes which were only likely to be supplied by a Gunter or Verrey. These notions, however, were genteel, and as they were now holding up their heads, it was deemed well to assume a few aristocratic airs. Here they tarried till the morrow.

On the following morning the journey was resumed; they did not start at an early hour, as Mrs. Inglis felt fatigued from the previous day's charioteering. At the last change Mr. Inglis suggested to the father-in-law, that, as he had been informed the road was exceedingly hilly, it would be desirable to have on another pair. The solicitor, reflecting that such extravagance could not be palpably blended with any client's bill of costs, raised an objection, but Letitia commended the idea of her husband, spoke with horror of the hills, and voted with the latter. Gideon was obliged to submit to having four horses.

The church clock of Elleringay was deliberately striking four as the carriage entered the village. The new family now became nervous, and they peeped through the windows anxious to observe the impression produced. Some half dozen old women protruded their wrinkled visages to contemplate the vehicle which in a cloud of dust was furiously hurried past, but no other signs of concern were apparent. Letitia had

dared to hope within herself that there would be a willing crowd ready to draw them in by hand—she had fancied the probability of a merry peal from the parish belfry, or the melodious strains of some rustic band, greeting with welcome the new squire. But, alas, for Mrs. Inglis's vain longings, no such enthusiasm hailed their reception! The younger gentleman beheld the disappointment pictured in the face of his spouse, and after a few moments' silence expressed a fear that they were about to sojourn amongst a set of clodhopping semi-barbarians.

On—on sped the yellow chariot, and it was indeed at a merry pace at which the horses were urged past the entrance lodge, and along that shady avenue of giant trees which conducted to the south front of the mansion. As it turned in at the lodge gates Mr. Inglis did not fail to take a hurried glance at the stone lions, whose ferocious features and erected tails presented a noble appearance at the portal of their domain. On alighting, Mr. Clynciere nimbly ascended the steps, his son-in-law marched forward

with becoming importance, and Letitia—poor Letitia—was well nigh hysterical with dignity. The postillions very deferentially touched their hats, when told to unharness their foaming steeds, and eat and drink their fill in the servants' hall. The new domestics were marvellously polite, and ran one against another in manifestation of their zeal.

With all the enquiring eagerness of a child, Letitia hurried first along one corridor, then along another, now into this room, then into that, so that she really became bewildered in space. Exclamations of delight continually escaped from her lips, and she was lost in a delirium of joy! Mr. Inglis held up his head, screwed upon his heel, and issued divers orders and counter-orders relative to the valuable luggage on the carriage, and in various other ways struck awe into the heart of every menial who accosted him. Mr. Clynhier eyed with complacent smile the glorious acres now his own, which outstretched far and wide to his view, and his bosom swelled with the pride of now being a large landed proprietor. Ere that evening's

sun had sunk to rest, the mansion within and without, the gardens, the vineries, the lawns, the pleasure grounds, had by each been impatiently inspected. What a glorious change, thought they, from the horrible confines, dusty streets, and noisy throng of London. Everything here felt so calm, so fresh, so lovely, and every person seemed so contented, so cheerful, that the world wore but the aspect of happiness. Oh, happiness, thy semblance, like the mirage, often dances before us in fascinating shapes, but when neared how are we deceived and disappointed!

Time to all now passed on falcon wing, the improvements had not been entirely completed, but it was a pleasure, and a most fortunate amusement to Squire Clynciere, immediately after unharnessing himself from business to have anything to occupy his mind. He directed repairs, planned additional buildings, and from morning to night was engaged with one concern or another. He visited his tenants, inspected their lands, and zealously endeavoured to impress them with the assurance that they would find in

him a generous and desirable landlord. With Farmer Fallow he held long conversations, and even that individual began to come round to the opinion that he might probably be a better person than the world gave him credit for. The son-in-law concentrated the major portion of his attention on the garden and hot-houses, and Letitia supervised every hole and corner of the mansion from the cellars and the first-floor offices to the most elevated attic. She had long interviews with the cook, and protested that no house in the country should have a more ample store of pickles and preserves.

When Sunday came, the new family were, of course, expected at church. The seats were unusually filled, as all were anxious to have a full, continuous gaze at the rich Londoners, and especially at the lady, whose beauty rumour had spoken with trumpet tongue. The spinster sisters had taken their seats, and were sitting with impatient look towards the door, by which the strangers were to effect their ingress. The large pew where the De Bohuns had sat for time immemorial,

and above which mural tablets bespoke their great virtues and illustrious deeds, had, like the mansion, undergone an entire renovation. The time-worn mats, and shabby hassocks had been removed in order to give place to carpets, softly stuffed cushions ; and crimson cloth, and shining rows of brass nails, imparted a showiness to its interior, and made it a very comfortable place for devotion. Mr. Inglis contrived that they should go in rather late, well knowing that by keeping expectation on tip-toe, they would be more thoroughly appreciated when they did appear. That gentleman was aware of it being deemed vulgar to be amongst the first assemblers, and he now had reason to be very scrupulous relative to all such matters. He had on one or two occasions attended service at St. George's, and the Quebec Chapel, Portman Square, where he had beheld gouty Earls and fat Duchesses heralded by powdered flunkies bearing a goodly load of spiritual books under their arm, and he resolved to emulate their very genteel and very humble example, consequently, the footman

of the Manor House kept at a very respectful distance behind them till he gained the hoary porch, he then took the lead, deposited the prayer books and bibles, and very deferentially held open the pew door. The new family entered with majestic step, and the "observed" of all observers," took their places amongst the soft cushions and scarlet splendour of the "squire's pew." The spinster sisters looked scanningly, the parson turned his head, and Mr. Shears actually forgot to say "Amen," whilst every rustic face was raised to contemplate the London Cressus, who had now succeeded their ancient rulers. Letitia evidently felt her preference, her husband, according to his wont, ran his fingers through his hair, his eye the while being directed to all places save his book, and his worthy father-in-law stood as erect as a robed mayor joining in a cathedral chaunt. Thus passed their *debut* before the Elleringaytonians. On leaving, the footman opened the door, and the family departed in the order in which they came.

As it may be imagined, popular report, as

it usually does, whether of good or ill, ran into an extreme, and magnified Gideon's wealth at least four-fold. Some even went so far as to declare that he did not even himself know the extent of his riches, and he was, by the unanimous consent of the villagers, accounted the richest man in the country. Some said he would be made a member of Parliament, others averred that he had again and again been requested to sit for the City of London, and a few were informed, on the most unquestionable authority, that he was on the list to be a lord! Mr. Inglis was swelled also into immense dimensions by that vague creator of the marvellous—report. He was even deemed a more powerful personage than his own vanity could have led him to aspire to; but it was that gentleman's good fortune to know nothing of what they deemed him, or it would have turned his head more awry than it actually was already. With regard to the lady, her beauty had been the theme of applause—but it was incontestable that in this particular there had been some mistake, as

the simplest rustic in church would protest that she was not to be compared to Kate De Bohun, as they generally called her, and no one ever said Miss De Bohun was a beauty.

The time now passed very tranquilly, the love of novelty had not lost its zest, one improvement after another was devised, till nothing remained to be desired, and everything within, without, and around the mansion, bore the characteristic of order, renovation, and neatness. Mr. Clynciere, fearing his active mind could never comfortably stagnate into sheer idleness, determined on occupying it with a little amateur farming. He purchased Marshall's prolix tomes on agriculture and planting, bought various new-fashioned implements of husbandry, and fully resolved by the happy union of science and practical acumen, to demonstrate to those dull bumpkins and bucolic squires amongst whom he had settled himself, not only that the agricultural classes are the most ignorant and unscientific set in the community, but that, with little or no additional outlay, it was

quite possible to double the amount of produce. With the only learned man in the village he had lengthy conversations, and that individual did not fail to tell him how sage were the observations relative to the cultivation of the soil, made by Columella and Virgil to the ancient Romans.

Mr. Inglis, as he became more at leisure, bestowed a portion of his ever-wakeful thoughts on the state of the game and the preserves. He had very readable notices put up in the plantations, announcing the appalling information that there were, secretly set, no end of man-traps and spring-guns! He purchased dogs and horses, together with all other requisites, in order to launch out as a sporting gentleman. His lady, as well as himself, now were in daily expectation of the calls to be made by certain of the county families. It had been hinted to him that Sir Harry Dashover, as well as some other old houses, intended seeking their acquaintance.

With the exception of one mischievous occurrence all run smoothly. One morning

when Squire Clynchiere and his son-in-law were passing through the lodge-gates, they were utterly astounded to behold the very unsuccessful effects of some volunteer artist who had essayed to improve the lions by a coat of paint; one was fantastically daubed with red and black, he had a scarlet head and neck, and tail diabolically dark; the other was as green as one of the statues over Belzoni's tomb, though, of course, a creature less docile and less to be admired. Squire Clynchiere immediately waxed very wrath, and gave voluble utterance to legal menaces, if he could only apprehend the offenders; the son-in-law declared, if he could find out the clodhopping brute, he would subject him at once to fistic punishment.

"I'll tell you, Sir, it comes to just this, you must be put in commission of the peace, and then these earth grovellers dare not play off such impertinent jokes."

"I do, indeed, think it will be wise to do so. I only wish I were on the magisterial bench now, and the loons should be taught

that Gideon Clyncchiere is not to be insulted with impunity."

Mrs. Inglis on being informed of this insulting liberty taken with effigies of their armorial insignia, strongly urged the squire (as she now called him) to be made a magistrate. Such a thing as this, thought she, was enough to expose them to the ridicule of all the better families in the neighbourhood. With this exception, however, matters at the present glided tranquilly away.

CHAPTER VII.

"Know then, if ills oblige thee to retire,
Those ills solemnity of thought inspire.

* * * *

On nature's wonders fix alone thy zeal!
They dim not reason, when the truth reveal;
So shall religion in thy heart endure
From all traditionary falsehood pure;
So life make death familiar to thine eye,
So shalt thou live, as thou may'st learn to die:
And though thou view'st the worst oppressor thrive,
From transient woe, immortal bliss derive."

SAVAGE'S WANDERER, *Canto V.*

"When war's deadly blast was blawn,
And gentle peace returning."

BURNS.

"These last memorials take
And prize them for his sake."

ABDY.

THE reader must now accompany us to the
Principality, whilst we cursorily review the

progress of matters at Griffstaye. After a long and wearisome journey, the fallen family reached their destination. Certain preparations had, it is true, preceded their arrival, yet there breathed an air of cold, forsaken comfortlessness, which painfully contrasted with that commodious home from which, by the ruthless hand of misfortune, they had just been driven. Godfrey's heart heaved with emotion as he entered this humble asylum in the Western wilds; but all murmurings now were idle, and ere long he essayed to look upon the change with resignation and complacency. His wife and family unanimously declared, that they could not only exist in their new residence, but be contented and happy. They conjured the father to dismiss his anguish, and no longer repine at the lot which heaven had imposed. Mrs. De Bohun, with a nobleness of soul like unto a Spartan mother, shook off the sad remembrance of their calamities, and diffused a sunshine calm, when many would have indulged in useless sorrowings, and seen but darkness and dismay.

With a heart that had at all times pulsed to virtue, with a steadfast assurance in the protection of Providence, she felt convinced, that the evil days would pass away, and as they travelled on, some undiscovered path would open out and conduct to better scenes. In those chastenings, which had of late pressed so hardly upon them, she beheld the issues of a greater good, and with humility bowed to drink at the cup dashed with the wormwood of reverses. The partner of her life never, until now, had such ample proofs of those sterling qualities which he always knew she possessed, but only needed the hour of trial for their more manifest development. These virtues in his spouse, like unto certain spices of Araby, gave out a sweeter perfume of goodness when broken and crushed, or as the rainbow hues shone brighter amongst renewing storms!

When they had become somewhat settled, a number of little improvements were devised. The elder daughters diligently sought to make every apartment as comfortable as circumstances would allow. They made ornaments,

hung up the pictures, painted, papered, and in numerous ways displayed simple ingenuity and refined taste. Poor old Simon was in all his doings actuated by a zeal equalling any in the family, to render Griffstaye a place compatible with the standing and high character of the occupants. He laboured assiduously in the garden, and soon rendered it the *beau ideal* of trim order and neatness. He sowed seeds, pruned the trees, re-gravelled the walks, built a rustic summer-house, and made a declaration, that if he were spared another year, it should look nothing short of *splendacious* ! It was quite wonderful to the family, as well as to old Simon, how, when people are put to their wits'-end—obliged to do with narrow means,—how contriving and ingenious they become, and how much can be shaped out of a little ! The spirit of industry and determination to put the best aspect on matters dispelled much of that sombreness which would otherwise have settled beneath their roof, and in the course of time, the house was so clean and comfortable internally, and everything with-

out so orderly and well arranged, that it was in every point of view a respectable residence.

One member of the family, incidentally spoken of, merits a moment's consideration, and that is, Katherine De Bohun. It is the common opinion, founded on common observation, that first children are seldom stars of the first magnitude. With respect to the person in question, it was otherwise, and nature in her appeared to have made an exception. During Kate's early years, Mrs. De Bohun often jestingly declared, she had a more awkward, heedless, tomboy than any mother in the county. Often did she chide her first-born, and pass smart strictures on her ungainly ways, but all this was of no use, Kate remained untamed and untameable, and romped and frolicked about regardless of all maternal monitions, and only bent on deeds of daring, or delighting in mischievous fun. At fifteen, when some at that age are loquacious, prim, precocious little women, miniature models of feminine beauty, Miss De Bohun was still, in all her actions and appear-

ance, a child, roving over hill, dale, and moorland, merry and thoughtless as the breezes which wooed the thick tresses that waved around her swan-like neck. Frequently did her mother descant on her unprepossessing figure, and essay to make her more thoughtful and dignified, but in vain; yet that mother well knew that her innocent heart was one of the holiest, purest, of mortal things. Her long limbs, tall and unfurnished frame, huge square chin and large nose, constituted anything but effeminate beauty, and rendered her as she really was, at first sight, an untaking girl. But on a narrower scrutiny, the discerning judge beheld the unequivocal characteristic of great force of character, and a power of parts that only needed time for their development. Those lustrous eyes, that wide and merry mouth, which played with all the quick conceptions of a brilliant fancy, those prominent eye-brows, and swelling temples, were attributes of no common kind, and presaged a superiority that would one day impress the most cursory observers.

Three summers passed away, and a change had then come over Katherine absolute and complete. She was no longer a child, and had put away childish things. A mind hitherto unstable and volatile, had subsided into a consistent, sober reflectiveness, in scarcely a feature resembling what it had been. The uncomely frame had now become full and rounded into the softest lines; the limbs turned and symmetrical as statue perfection, and her step and mien were graceful as the first blush of summer morning, blended with a certain majesty of deportment that ever commanded respect. Her mental endowments had also undergone a marvellous mutation, and appeared as if subdued by a slight constitutional despondency. Often impelled by some strange fancy, she would steal in solitude away to listen in the dark woodlands to the wild-dove's plaintive note, to gather the uncultured flowers, or musing sit by rippling brook or dashing water-fall, like Numa at the fountain of Egeria. If with mankind and the busier world she had held little or no communion, her eager soul

had now learnt to drink deep of bookish lore, and it was becoming rapidly imbued with the maxims and deep thinkings of those mighty intellects which have left an abiding impress on posterity. This communing with the spirits of the past, this meditation on grand conceptions and refined imaginings, had enlarged and disciplined a soul that soared with falcon flight above the vulgar throng, and made Katherine De Bohun an honour to her sex as to her name.

The reader, doubtless, asks within himself the very natural question, if she had ever loved? She had—yes, she had loved a being to idolatry, and often now, at midnight hour, would gaze from her lattice on the deep blue heavens, and with trembling tongue exclaim in the words of the poet—

“The soul of Adonäis like a star,
Beacons from the abodes where the eternal are!”

But her Adonäis was that brother, who, a few fleeting months before, had for his country died with Roman heroism—her darling Moreton. For no other youth her

heart had pulsed ; her affections yet had only been the holy feelings of a sister's love. Her birds, her books, her flowers, were now her chief delight, and amongst the darkling clouds which had lowered over her father's house, she had found a beguiling pleasure in these innocent objects of her solicitude.

One bright morning in the early spring of 1816, as Katherine sat working at a piece of embroidery that lay on her knee, and her father, according to his wont, was dangling one leg over the arm of that capacious chair which stood in the corner of the little parlour, which looked over one of the most charming views in Merionethshire, the latter, after a short pause, broke the silence and said :—

“After all, my dear Kate, we ought to be thankful that so pretty a spot as this remains our own out of the havoc of so much misfortune.”

“We ought indeed, my dear father,” replied Kate, as she desisted from her occupation, and looked wistfully out of the window. “But it is a contented mind which

confers the golden tint to all that surrounds us. Happiness is a good within the reach of most, if they would but think so. If we are not in the position we once were, life's moderate comforts are not beyond our grasp, and as to yourself, sir, you are surrounded by those whose only hope is to console and cheer you. The empty vanities of fashion and gaiety are not the essentials to human bliss, were it so the Moral Governor of the Universe would then have been unjust. There is not a lot, however lowly, without its peculiar recommendations, nor an exalted station without its concomitant drawbacks."

"You are right my child—you are right," observed Godfrey, "and I only regret that I had not when at your age the same rational views."

"If we for a moment appeal to the pages of history, how many after becoming nauseated with pageantry and tired of dominion, have sought a retreat like this from choice, to which you have been driven by necessity. Scylla and Charles V. voluntarily descended from human greatness to live in humble

peace, and a thousand others of illustrious name have, from self-preference, plunged into obscurity. The baubles of splendour may please for a time, but weariness and disgust come in their train, and riches and power are too frequently rather the causes of care than the promoters of happiness. The lines of the northern Anacreon are apt to the question:—

“ ‘ If happiness hae no’ her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest.

“ Nae treasures nor pleasures
Can make us happy lang;
The heart’s aye the part aye
That makes us right or wrang.”

Godfrey nodded assent, and then quickly replied :

“ Yes—yes, even poets are right sometimes.”

“ They tell truths, but decked out in fascinating hues, and poets may be philosophers, only that they choose to inculcate their philosophy through the agreeable me-

dium of refined imaginings. The exalted sensibility of genius delights in the beautiful, the ideal, the perfect, and loves to syllable its thoughts in numbers, to create breathing forms, and in a thousand ways blend the sunbeam with the dark things of earth. God has given to some a more than ordinary spark of the celestial to unite with human dust; and it is they whose magic power can for awhile carry the more grovelling worldlings to the mountain top, to contemplate the Ineffable—the Eternal, and behold grandeur, and harmony, and wonder in things which the less endowed pass by in heedlessness and torpor,” returned Katharine eloquently.

The road conducting from the market-town of D—to Gryffstaye was through a wild and thinly populated, but charming district. It wound around the bases of lofty hills, and was so circuitous and diversified that every step presented to the traveller's eye the varying prospects of enchanting scenery. Each turn threw out into fairer view the loveliest picture of sternly-wild or cultivated

landscape. Here lay a valley yielding an annual abundance of rich pasturage or waving crops, there a hill filled to its very summit, yonder a mountain rising sublimely to the clouds, and around a thousand rills giving forth their never-dying music. Flocks and herds roamed in freedom over unbounded ranges, and the watchful goat paced with stately step along the dizzy brink of the rugged cliff. On the morning in question a traveller was to be seen wending his way along this romantic route; ever and anon he stopped and cast his eye around in admiration, and then, with measured step, resumed his journey. At length coming to the ruins of a "monastic dome," which occupied the centre of a small green vale by the wayside, he diverted from his course and narrowly inspected these solitary mementos of a former age. By-and-bye he took from his pocket a sketch-book, and artistically drew the picturesque remains of what had assuredly once been an elaborate pile. Having for some time thus halted, he once more renewed his march, and on turning the next bend in the

road he unexpectedly beheld a dwelling warmly nestling amongst a patch of lofty trees, and not far distant an old man was absorbingly occupied in the construction of a rustic gate. The traveller came into close proximity before he was aware of any one being present, so intently was he engaged in his rude artifice.

"What a charming prospect you have from this situation, my good man; I have travelled far but never beheld a more glorious landscape."

The addressed held up his head suddenly, as if somewhat startled by the stranger's voice.

"It is indeed, sir—it is indeed," replied he, for a moment desisting from his labour, and respectfully touching his hat to one whom at a glance he recognized as a gentleman.

"Is there not a village a short distance from this?" asked the stranger.

"There is a village some two or three miles hence, but not in the direction you are taking, sir."

"I'm sorry I have taken the wrong turn, as I have had a long walk this morning."

"I shall be happy to point out to you the right road, sir; but pray what is the name of the place you desire to reach?"

"Griff—Griff—yes Griffstaye—Griffstaye," said the stranger, at first hesitatingly, then iterating the name.

"This is Griffstaye—this is Griffstaye!" quickly answered the old man.

"I thought it was a village, and this is but a lone house."

"There is no village of that name, as I ever heered of in this part of the country, sir."

"Well, my good fellow, does not one Captain De Bohun reside here?"

"He does, sir."

"He has not lived here very long though, I believe?"

"Only a few months, sir—only a few months."

"My errand is to see him and his family, and—"

The old man's eyeballs dilated with amaze-

ment that any one should find his master in so remote a part of his Majesty's dominions. He stood for a moment, as if in reflection, to ask within himself whether he had done right or not in acknowledging that his employer lived there. The recollection of lawyers, bailiffs, writs, executions, auctioneers, came with magical rapidity before his mind's-eye, and the question suggested itself, was this another of those horrid Londoners who had made such havoc of the family's fortunes, and had he on some evil errand ferretted them out in their seclusion? He interrupted the speaker by some casual observation, as if to give his thoughts breathing time, ere he committed himself. After once more eying him *cap-à-pie*, he felt certain he *was* a gentleman, and that it would be proper to speak the truth in reply to any questions by which he might be interrogated.

"Shall I tell Captain De Bohun of your presence?" asked Simon.

"I beg you will."

Simon threw down the hammer, which he had still retained in his hand, and was

hurrying towards the house, when the strange gentleman called out and bid him retrace his steps.

"Take this card, and say that Major Douglas does himself the honour of calling on Captain De Bohun."

As the major placed his address in Simon's hand the poor old man looked steadfastly in his face for a moment, and would fain have entered into a brief *tête-à-tête*; but he deemed it most respectful to at once deliver the message.

"If you will please to follow me, sir," said Simon, "I'll show you the garden-wicket which conducts to the first door."

The major did so, and ere his hand had touched the knocker, his card had been read by Captain De Bohun.

"Major Douglas—Major Douglas!" said Godfrey, somewhat agitated, and pausing for a moment to recal, if he could, the name to memory. "The gentleman is an utter stranger to me—I remember him not. Kate, my love, ring the bell, and desire him to be shown in. I fear that in our present cir-

circumstances we are ill-situated for the entertainment of such visitors."

In a few moments, a tall, military-looking man was in the presence of Godfrey and his daughter. He appeared fatigued with his long walk, and was soiled with the ill-conditioned state of the roads. His features were not handsome, but strongly marked, and characterized by the agreeable expression of a sensible mind. His upper lip was covered by a thickset brown moustache, and at a guess, he might be six-and-twenty.

"I once had the pleasure, captain, of meeting you; but, I dare say you have no recollection of me now." He then bowed to Miss De Bohun, whom the father introduced, and was about to continue the conversation, when Godfrey replied:

"I have no recollection, indeed I have not, of that meeting, sir;" at the same time pushing towards him a chair, and entreating him to be seated.

"I was, in all but name, captain, the brother of your son. I am come, in the fulfilment of a promise which I made to that

noble spirit, ere it left us 'darkling in this world of tears.'"

Godfrey's lips quivered, and his cheeks grew pale. Katherine, overcome by this sudden announcement, let fall the work at which she was engaged, and looked, with fixed glance, at one who had come, as it were, a messenger from the grave.

"Great God be thanked, that in my troubles and my age I am not wholly forgotten!" said the father, as he cordially sprang forward, and grasped the major's hand. "We cannot entertain you as we once could, my dear friend, but, from this moment, you have the heartiest, warmest welcome 'tis in our power to offer. The friend—companion of my lost boy—aye, by that heaven which hears me, you are indeed welcome to our humble home. Kate—Kate, my love, go tell your mother of this glorious news, she will, indeed, shed tears of joy!" Katherine hurried out of the room to communicate this strange intelligence.

Mrs. De Bohun, who had now become compelled by necessity to be a thrifty house-

wife, was, at the moment, superintending domestic concerns. The other branches of the family had gone to take their morning walk, and from the window were still visible ascending the neighbouring hill. Quickly did Mrs. De Bohun repair to the sitting-room, and in all the unaffected sincerity of a mother's feelings hail the stranger who had come on so holy a mission.

"A thousand thanks—a thousand thanks, sir," said she excitedly clasping the hand of the major between her own. "The acquaintance—friend of my departed boy, you are indeed a welcome visitant. Heaven will bless you for the trouble you have taken in coming into this wilderness of a country."

"'Tis but the discharge of a commonplace duty, madam."

A slight pause ensued and during this interval the major's glance involuntarily turned on the dark portraiture of those antique personages, all of whose eyes seemed livingly rivetted on the scene before them. In each he did not fail to trace some lineament of his long lost friend, the young hero

of whose glory he had now come to tell. Yes! the pencil in depicting them had preserved that dauntless bravery which had been in such large measure transmitted to their lion-hearted descendant. In one corner of the room was suspended an old fashioned sword—in another a coarsely fabricated and rusty helmet with its visor—in an oaken cupboard, ostentatiously stood a black-jack* which Godfrey prized more than if it had been a golden chalice; and on cursorily surveying the furniture, there was a quaint old fashionedness about various articles which ill-accorded with the domicile, and which indeed told of glories gone. The dress and address of the De Bohuns inspired respect, they gave the notions of a faded gentility, and Patrician blood showed itself through the guise of humbleness and privation. It required no stretch of the imagination to picture these individuals in baronial halls, instead of inhabiting the modest dwelling on a dreary wild.

When the ebullition of this the first

* Ancient drinking cups, made of leather and mounted with silver. In some old families they are still to be seen.

interview had passed over, Major Douglas detailed much of what the reader already knows. He spoke of that settled sadness which unaccountably overshadowed the mind of the deceased, and under which he was at times in a moody madness—he told of the prognostications the young soldier had himself of his end—detailed particulars of that desperate courage he displayed on the field—assured them that Cæsar was not more loved by the Tenth Legion, nor Rupert by the Cavaliers, than he was by the stout hearts who fought by his side; and he described the dreadful charge in which he fell! With the utmost minuteness did the major convey the last words which came from his death-whitening lips and pictured, as well as words could picture, that happy smile which for an instant flushed in his countenance ere his warrior soul winged away. During this recital the trio burst into tears, and the major himself felt that there were times even when a soldier's cheek could not be dry!

For a few moments silence ensued, Major Douglas then drew from his pocket a some-

what voluminous parcel, sealed with the De Bohun crest.

"Miss De Bohun, I promised your poor brother that if he fell and I survived, I would myself place this packet in your hand."

Then turning towards the mother, he thus went on :—

"This ring and locket, madam, I took from Moreton's corpse on the field. I have now brought them to that mother of whom I have so often heard him tenderly speak, and whom he did not, as I have told you, forget with his latest breath."

Mrs. De Bohun was about to give utterance to her feelings when the major resumed :—

"One moment more, and I have done. This jetty lock I cut from his brow, when that brow grew icy and had set for ever!"

Mrs. De Bohun in her awakened agony kissed the treasured relic again and again, then placed it in her bosom to dry the tears by which it was bedewed. The other memento she cherished with holy care, then for a brief period indulged in a paroxysm of that anguish which mothers alone can feel.

Katherine sat in quiet but poignant sorrow; and the old man, burying his face in his hands, was like one bereft of consciousness. He who was by them had of late beheld strange spectacles, but this was one of those tenderly touching scenes which go at once to the heart. He could not refrain from contemplating the number of domestic tragedies, like the one of which he was now a part, that had of late taken place around the hearths of Europe—and all this worked by the demon passion—war!

In the course of time the storm began to subside. A wound had been torn open afresh, but ere long it once more essayed to re-close.

When the major set out on his journey he determined on effecting his return as soon as possible. He left his portmanteau at the market town, from whence he had walked that morning, in the conviction that he should retrace his steps that evening, deeming a few hours' tarry at Griffstaye would suffice for all he had to communicate. It cannot be wondered at that the family should lay

an embargo on him for a few days' sojourn. They felt almost by his presence that something of Moreton was with them; he had been the bearer of his death-told messages, and could detail the particulars of his history to his last of earthly hours. They, one and all, besought him to remain. He was convinced of their warm-heartedness and hospitality, and did so. It was not at that particular time so convenient to him as it would have been two or three months later, but he essayed to oblige others, and generously forgot himself. Simon was desired to mount the Corporal and fetch the major's luggage from the coach town, to order fresh supplies, and every one beneath the roof seemed only emulous of making their guest contented and happy. Soon did he bring to Godfrey's remembrance the ensign whom he met at Colonel Sommerton's rooms at the Canterbury barracks, and informed him that the then ensign was the now major. By death's dreadful deeds he had risen in one day to his majority; and in consideration of his valuable suggestions when the plans of

the Waterloo campaigns were formed, the Duke subsequently recommended that his sovereign would do well to confer on Major Murdoch Douglas the honour of C. B., a recommendation, it is needless to observe, which was at once complied with. Thus, at a youthful age he had gained a rank and won honours, which few septagenarians have the good fortune to possess.

Godfrey's spirits had long been dashed ; he had of late gone through fiery trials, and was now, in despite of all moral resistance, gradually bending beneath a superincumbent load of disasters. A friend of his late son, a military man, a man of the world, a gentleman, now to visit him ! Why this was a smile of fortune most opportune, and one that came to shed a transitory sunbeam over a soul where all was winter. Long may he stay, we dare be bound is the honest wish of every reader of these imperfect pages. The ladies, who now saw no society, and who heard no more of fashion and the busier world than if they resided at Reikjarvick or Astrakan, regarded this

visit of the major as one of those few good things which occasionally light up the dark and devious roads of human destiny ; indeed he was a kind of god-send dropped down upon Griffstaye, to briefly break the monotony of sequestered life.

Murdoch Douglas, was in every acceptation of the term a gentleman—more, a warm-hearted, an ingenuous, a good man. He was not a genius, nor would he under any circumstances have blazed out like some of those hot and igneous compositions whose souls burst forth to fury or to fame by the veriest spark ; he would never have set the world into commotion, nor by any grand discoveries, or brilliant display of talents, have reared to his memory a white stone ; but he was a diligent, reflective and fully informed man, whose predominating characteristics were integrity and thorough-going common sense, which are perhaps, after all, the most desirable and comfort-bringing attributes. He had the wisdom to steer clear of those extravagances by which men in his profession too frequently become corrupted. Flowing with conversation

and possessing a sprightliness of spirit, he felt, ere twenty-four hours had elapsed, as much at home and as happy as if the root-tree of Griffstaye had covered his own house. Soon was it apparent that he was becoming a general favourite.

The delightful scenery around Griffstaye was not unheeded on the part of the visitor. On each successive day the ladies planned some fresh walk, and recollected some new object of interest worthy of the major's inspection, nor was any scheme left undevised by which the time might pass most agreeably.

Being an admirer of nature, and feeling a pleasure in the contemplation of the sublime and beautiful, the Welsh scenery presented no common attractions; and his rambles with the young ladies, if only enlivened and rendered pleasurable by their conversation, would indeed have been desirable, independent of all the romantic associations by which every step was surrounded. With Katherine he discoursed much, and by some chance or the other, it continually happened that he was most conveniently ready to assist her over any

obstruction in the path, or to offer his arm whenever the road was rough and unsuited to a lady's footsteps. So happy did he appear, that he seemed to unbend from all the stiffness of ceremonious reserve, and he frolicked and scampered about over the uneven wilds, like a roebuck in the forest of Athol. He plucked the fresh spring flowers, industriously sought the sweet violets on some sun-lit bank, told merry tales, and was the soul, the everything of agreeableness and good humour. When they returned home, conversation and games, reading and music, filled up the quick-flying hours, and no one felt Griffstaye so dull as heretofore. Godfrey found in the major an agreeable companion, and they fully and freely discussed not only all the particulars of the recent campaign, but also the present aspect of European affairs, and the phase of the political world at home. All this was too acceptable to be of long continuance, and the day of departure waxed near, it came.

It would be superfluous to observe how one and all lamented the loss of such an

amiable visitor, how Mrs. De Bohun cordially grasped his hand, and poured upon his head all the pious benedictions of a mother's blessing—how Godfrey again and again invited him to repeat his visit—how the young ladies crowded round him, and with what fervour he bade adieu to them, and to Kate more emphatically (of course to her, because she was the eldest). Old Simon had punctually to the minute brought the Corporal and the phaeton to the wicket gate, the major sprang into his seat, and amidst a volley of farewells effected his retreat.

CHAPTER VIII.

"By Heaven I'll tell her boldly that 'tis she!
Why should she be asham'd, or angry be,
To be belov'd by me?"

COWLEY.

PERCHANCE some of our courteous readers may remember that there once was in Gracechurch Street such a place as the Spread Eagle, but whether it exist now or no, few, doubtless, ever have reason to ask themselves or anybody else, and it is to be feared that the wings of the bird have collapsed—that it is moulting—so degenerate have become the days of that once renowned coaching establishment. Well! one dark rainy night, just as the legion of metropolitan clocks were in the simultaneous act of striking twelve (in the

spring of 1816, be it remembered), a coach and four, all dripping with wet and heartily bespattered with mud, drove into the hotel-yard. Then there was such a clatter of hoofs—such a running to and fro on the part of porters, horse-keepers, waiters, and like bipeds constituting the domestic orders of these large places of public entertainment! One held in his hand a lighted candle, another dexterously caught coachey's whip, and, in fine, each was eager for employment—then the slowly ascending columns of steam, which rose in mimic clouds from the reeking flanks of the jaded brutes, which had been urged on at a merry pace from Barnet—then the umbrellas still pertinaciously held up by miserable, half-drowned way-farers, who, notwithstanding having reached their destination, really seemed loath to move their stiff limbs from the damp seat, for the better exchange of bright fires and coffee, or whatever their gustatory faculties pleased—then the lamp-light and candle-light, which threw out into dim visibleness from midnight obscurity, those quaint, hostelry-formed

galleries, which conducted to a number of remote little rooms belting round half the buildings which hemmed in the coach-yard—all these presented a picture now existing only as a picture of past things, past men, and past deeds.

To repeat that a coach and four drove in there—into that eagle's nest—at the particular time declared, it may then be well to go on and say that a tall gentleman sprang from a snug, warm berth, which he had occupied in the interior, doubtless in very happy ignorance of the uncomfortable condition of those luckless wights who had taken their places on the roof. This was no other person than our friend Murdoch Douglas, who thus and there terminated his journey from Taffyland. He at once asked for a private room, and gave special directions for a hot and comfortable repast. It so happened that he could have no other room save one of those out-of-the-way-of-bustle little boxes arranged round the aforesaid railed galleries. Thither he wended his way heralded by *Boots*, who, trusty guide, Atlas-like, bore his

portmanteau. Suppers, candles, slippers, and so forth, in no great length of time were rendered available; the tired traveller took his refreshment, then crossed his legs, sat full before the fire and smoked his cigar. On peeping through the little window, which he did by merely drawing aside the curtain, all below the gallery looked wet, dull, miserable; two or three dim and dirty lamps emitted the straggling rays of light which only served to show that it was a wretched night—that even this great hostelry-yard, silent and forsaken, save when the occasional slam of a door, or the discordant brawl of a horse-keeper shouting at the tired animals, whose grooming had scarcely finished, was heard—was still. In that little room he was too far from the street to hear the rumble of vehicles passing over the uneven pavement.

“Hang this London—here I am again,” said he, returning to the chair he had for a moment vacated, “I always did hate it.” He then gave two or three puffs at his cigar, and after a few moments’ rumination

resumed, "Yes!—I will—I will—I'll sell out and have no more to do with soldiering. The allies have settled France for half-a-century, and I'd lay my life on't there will be no more fighting and campaigning for an age to come. It was a true saying of the great Lord Burleigh, that soldiers in peace are like chimneys in summer. I have got my majority and C.B., at twenty-seven—have a snug income, and what in the world's the use of me hum-drumming about from one garrison to another, languishing through monotonous days and killing nights at balls and masquerades? How much better to take a place in the country, and hunt, shoot, fish, sketch—anything, everything, free and untrammelled as the wind. I'll think of a wife too!—Deuced nice girl she is, accomplished and clever—had her brother lived, poor fellow, he would—"

The soliloquy was at this moment interrupted by the pretty maid of the hotel who brought in a rush-light, and desired to know the time at which the gentleman would be called.

Being once more in chambered solitude his busy mind recounted the very pleasant visit he had had in Wales, and brought to recollection the sensible remarks and divers fascinations of Katherine De Bohun. From some indescribable cause he felt unhappy, and only sighed to be once more at Griffstaye. The silvery voice of Kate still rang in his ears, and he saw before his mind's-eye the agreeable rambles and delightful recreation he had had during the days which had just terminated. After long and lonely musings, he retired to dream of Katherine and her mountain home.

We do not for one moment doubt the indefeasible right of Major Murdoch Douglas, C.B., to sell his commission, settle as country squire, turn benedict or anything else he chose; but it was his interest to think a moment ere he plunged into any rash determinations. It is true he could leave his profession with well-acquired honours, and, too, at an unusually early age—it is equally true he had the power, if he willed it, to adopt a number of fresh, fanciful, and fanatic schemes

—but to act wisely is generally to consider beforehand.

In the west of Argyleshire, not far from the coast, in a secluded and sterile glen, stood, and still stands, a time worn old mansion, which from its construction, was, unquestionably, built in those days when feudalism was giving way to more peaceful and enlightened times. This was Castle Duncraig. Its formation typified the transitive state of society, as it was built partly in the castellated style, and partly after the fashion of modern dwellings. Strength and durability were unquestionably more aimed at than elegance and convenience, nevertheless its internal arrangements, were very far from being either rude or uncomfortable. It had stood centuries of Borean blasts unscathed, and gave evidence of the probability of a still longer continuance. In that ancient home there resided a gouty, cross-grained, old-bachelor baronet; and at the time now particularly spoken of, he was waxing near the termination of his eighth decade. When he came into the estate he was by no means

rich, but he resolved by the observance of a rigid economy and a quiet mode of life, to rid the property of an incubus which had long hung over it.

Six-and-forty years had passed away since he came into possession, and, during the whole of that period, he had been, as the world words it, a saving man. He had few friends, was little given to hospitality, and was precisely one of those individuals who live and die without doing good or ill. In the concerns of others he took no interest, and mainly cared for himself; seldom did he pass beyond the bounds of his own territories, and year after year rolled away without producing in him much of change either morally or physically. He was the uncle of Murdoch Douglas, and the young soldier was his heir. The old man never condescended to have much communion with his nephew, yet it was known that he entertained for him a high opinion; and right proud was he when he beheld in the papers that one of his own blood—of his own name, had been made a C.B. at twenty-seven. They occasionally

corresponded, and, on three or four occasions, young Murdoch had, by especial invitation, visited his testy old relative. From what has now been said, it would indeed have been highly impolitic in Murdoch to have jumped, at one fell swoop, into matrimonial meshes, without previously consulting the octogenarian uncle. When it pleased heaven to remove Sir Murdoch to his "last lair," why then his successor could in all things exercise his own discretion.

On the following morning the weary traveller did not awake till half-past ten. From six to eight o'clock, a.m., there had been a considerable bustle, in the way of rolling of wheels, clattering of hoofs, expletives uttered, *ore rotundo*, by guards, coachmen, and their satellites, together with the clashing of luggage, cracking of whips, and all the uneuphonious discordancies of a great coaching-yard; yet all such did not break the slumbers of Murdoch, who snoored on in the land of dreams. Like all other sleepers, he at length awoke to consciousness, and, like the generality of travellers, breakfasted,

paid his bill, and bade adieu to the Spread-Eagle.

Days got over, and a few weeks wore away, but the journey to Wales was continually in his thoughts—he essayed, and in vain, to dispel the delightful associations. He sold his commission, but was still miserable, and knew not how to regain his wonted equanimity. He now declared, within himself, that he would seek Katherine De Bohun's hand. Before doing so, he wrote a letter, couched in most respectful terms, to Sir Murdoch, asking his approval, in the event of being successful. The old man, like all penurious-minded old men, expressed some regret at being informed that the lady would bring to his nephew neither fields nor consols; however, he approved of the connection, and gave his consent. The *ex-militaire* now, without much ado, once more set out for the west. It was June, and as he had always had a piscatorial taste, and was a tolerably adept knight of the wand, he took with him the requisites for angling in the Welsh streams; besides, a fishing tour supplied an excellent

pretext for once more seeing his hospitable friends at Griffstaye.

The surprise was not greater than the delight when Murdoch once more entered the cosy little parlour at Griffstaye. He was dressed in tourist's costume, and it scarcely needed the explanation that he was on a fishing expedition. Godfrey seized his hand with delight, and the ladies, one after another, cordially welcomed him. That uneasy disquietude which had of late made Murdoch restless and unhappy was now unfelt, and he thought himself in an elysium in which a life would be too brief. The mountain rambles were again resumed, and towards Kate he became doubly attentive. They wandered alone, played and sung together, and seemed so taken up with one another, that the real state of matters was even obvious to every one beneath the roof-tree. The major offered his hand and was accepted, with the proviso that the father gave his consent. Godfrey at once bestowed his daughter and his heart on Murdoch, and the old man, in so doing, almost felt that in

him he had gained another son. It was a consolation to reflect that a man of honour and bravery—one who had received special distinctions from his sovereign—who had been the confidant and friend of his boy—had sought the hand of his much-loved and noble daughter. It joyed him that he was going to give her to one of whose goodness and high-toned mind they had long heard, and who would, doubtless, make her a fond and affectionate husband.

* * * *

A glorious morning in September—the loveliest month in the year! Standing on the hill at Griffstaye, mountains, valleys, sky, ocean, marvellously beautiful! The sun shines brightly, though the air is cool; but for a moment behold those sailing mountains in the sky—towering aloft in huge snowy packs, and tinged with burnished gold—the Himalayas of heaven—silently floating to the blue, dread regions of eternity! Hark to the carols of the wild bird's song. See how the day-god silvers the lake in the vale—what shadow and sunshine! The earth

smiles with gladness; and if our classic friend Dr. Leech were with us now, he would decline the scene as the *ἀνέριθμον γέλασμα* of nature! Why this morning are there so many laughing faces, so much hilarity and good-humour at Griffstaye? Every feature tells of some unwonted happiness. The young ladies are hurrying from one room to another, Mrs. De Bohun is all bustle, old Simon is alternately shedding a tear and bursting into a merry "Ha! ha!" whilst even Godfrey himself has half forgot his grief. Murdoch and Katherine to-day are to be one! A wedding-day, and the joy-bells shall chime!

Preparations for this momentous event had for some time previously been carried on with great vigour. The sisters had industriously employed their needles in the outfit of fashion and furbelows. Godfrey's wardrobe was replenished, Simon had his outer man endued in fresh livery, and even the phaeton exulted in a shining coat of green paint! On the morning in question, at an early hour, the ladies were dressed in readiness for the

ceremony. Simon hurried about with a white favour pinned to one breast, and an immense bouquet stuck in the other, and even the Corporal, when he shook his head, waved a graceful bunch of straw-coloured dahlias, placed there in imitation of the emblematic orange garland which was to adorn the bridal fair. It was a pretty sight to behold the nuptial party set off from that mountain dwelling—one that would have formed a charming picture, had it been retained on canvass. At the garden wicket, one of those yellow posting-chariots which once were to be seen in every postal establishment in the country, was drawn up, and to it attached a sprightly team of four greys. The postilions had put on their best professional attire, and the goodly white satin rosettes at once intimated the happy journey they were about to take; in the rear was the Griffstaye equipage, presenting, as we have observed, a very unusual aspect of prosperity and renovation. The young ladies were dressed in white, in dresses precisely corresponding with that of the bride; and

their attire was plain and elegant. A young friend of Murdoch's conducted the noble-looking Katherine to the carriage, and when she passed from the portal of her father's home for the last time as Miss De Bohun, poor old Simon's eye grew moist, and he entered his protest that "Miss Kate was a splendacious leddy!"

The little church was a mile and a-half distant, and as the morning was so delightfully fine, some of the party walked and others rode, without any attempt at regularity—indeed, the two vehicles were unequal to the conveyance of the whole number. That humble house of God was an unpretending edifice, and situate as if in the remoteness of solitude. It stood in a secluded vale, on the border of a small blue lake, which was nursed in the bosoms of surrounding mountains; happy site, not only for the artless worshippers who frequented it, but when life was ended, to lie down in that last long sleep into which must, sooner or later, be hushed every child of humanity. To gaze on the pyramids, which have entombed kingly

dust for forty centuries, or to meditate on the monumental relics of the Appian Way, might fill the soul with reflections, and make the contemplative deem existence at best but a shadow; but the remote little churchyard, through whose uneven paths the young, the gay, the expectant were now passing, by its silence, its rustic simplicity, was a spot to impress the least meditative mind with seriousness, and give a profitable lesson to all who entered its calm precincts.

The clergyman who officiated was a plain and artless man, who spent an even and unchequered life, gladdened by the calm and consolatory reflection of living according to his professions, in the fulfilment of his allotted duty. The entire party having assembled at the church-yard gate, they then formed themselves in regular order, and entered that hoary porch. Godfrey's features were the index of many hued feelings; the present moment was one, if he rightly considered it, that ought to give him pleasure, but a dark spot remained in his memory, and ever and anon, even when his face was lit

up with a smile, the momentary sombreness of a flitting shadow was indisputably evident. When he gave his first-born child to another he felt as a father, as one who had been crushed by disappointment might be expected to feel, but the high qualities of Murdoch Douglas had long been known to him, and he was convinced that his daughter would find in him a kind-hearted husband, and a good man.

Merrily pealed the joy-bells in that antiquated tower, and as their music chimed were borne on the bosom of the mountain breeze, it seemed like the simple melody of man added to the wilder beauties of that romantic vale. Murdoch and his wife nimbly sprang into the chaise, and the grey horses bounded up the hill to Griffstaye, the captain availed himself of the phaeton, and the rest of the party, with the exception of the clergyman, who seated himself by Godfrey, insisted on walking.

When the happy pair had arrived, and when the phaeton had also discharged its

cargo, Murdoch put forth his hand, and grasping Godfrey's, exclaimed:—

“Father ! (I now address you by that sacred appellation)—my parents died in my infancy, I remember not the affectionate accents of the parental tongue—You have given me to link her destiny with mine, your first-born, one of the greatest treasures of your heart. It shall be my constant endeavour to evince that your confidence has not been misplaced. A dauntless hero once addressed you by that tender term—he is gone—he was my friend—my all but brother; your days are verging into the yellow leaf, and need a comforter—I am now your son !” then turning to Mrs. De Bohun, “and you are my mother !”

Godfrey and Mrs. De Bohun felt utterly overcome at this affectionate declaration of one who was now so nearly united to them, each shed a fleeting tear, and though the chastisement of heaven had of late been severely dispensed, they felt that better days were assuredly coming.

It would be something of a work of superelevation here to describe that joyfulness which beamed on all at Griffstaye. The reader can doubtless imagine the wit and hilarity which enlivened the breakfast table, how the sisters would address Kate as Mrs. Douglas, how Godfrey would tell tales of *his* wedding day—what harmless jests the simple-hearted divine from time to time would make, and what blushing and tittering there were amongst the girls when the finely-sectioned pieces of bridecake were put through the ring to bring the dreamy apparitions of future husbands to their pillows, and then afterwards the lashing-to of sundry well-corded packages to the awaiting yellow chaise! But all these associations can by most be vividly pictured.

An anxious moment was about to come, when Katherine was to depart with her affianced. How holy and tender was that kiss of affection which each sister gave to her whom they so devotedly loved, how fervent the embrace of the father, and who could describe those forcible and sacred feelings

which impulsated in Mrs. De Bohun's bosom, as, in the farewell, she clasped her daughter to her heart. The four greys stood in readiness, Simon held open the door, and as the happy pair ascended the steps of the vehicle each shook the old domestic's hand, every inmate rushed out to take a last look, Godfrey's lips quivered, several shed some hurrying drops, the clergyman uttered a benediction, whips cracked, wheels revolved, the wedded couple were borne quickly away, and poor old Simon lachrymally again and again declared they were a "splendacious pair."

The incumbent of the little mountain church and Murdoch's friend remained to dinner, and this day was to all a day of unalloyed happiness.

In the following chapter it will be desirable to return to other individuals mentioned in the narrative.

CHAPTER IX.

“Good Lamb the Curate, much approved,
Indeed by all his flock beloved.”

PETER PINDAR.

“Flying turkeys gobble,
Fowls cackle, screaming geese, with stretch'd wing, hobble;
Dire death his horse's hoofs to ducklings deal
And goslings gasp———”

IBID.

It hath been said that in the anticipation of some imagined good consists half the pleasure. It is no uncommon thing for men to raise within themselves visions of happiness, and unremittingly essay to realize them—aye, even at the cost of a life of exertion; and when they have reached the goal of their desires, how much of dissatisfaction

and disappointment are mixed up with the treasure on which the heart hath so long been fixed. Human reasoning is taught, by experience, that with all things of earth, there is a dark as well as a sunny side, and that even with the fairest conditions of humanity, there are associations which negative unalloyed enjoyment. To regard such facts otherwise than as blessings would be to renounce those salutary and corrective influences, so necessary for our moral discipline, and to win us to virtue. If in this world those imaginary perfectabilities could be found, after which the soul pants, the considerations of the future would be more, than is even now the case, forgotten, and by our nature we should be wedded by still closer union with the external realities by which we are surrounded, and which absorb so much of our attention. It is in the afflictive trials of hopes unfulfilled, in the blightings of promise, and in the chagrin and vexation consequent on the non-realization of darling expectancies, that the mind becomes improved and chastened, by such that the better

principles and nobler attributes of our being are led to rise in contemplation above the perishing objects of dust, and soar skywards towards the loftier heights of a more exalted destiny !

Gideon Clynciere had studiously rendered the mansion, of which he had come into the proud possession, as orderly and comfortable as contrivance and outlay could make it. The superintendence of improvements for some time constituted an agreeable employment, and so long as his mind was occupied he felt at ease, nor was there presented much of which he had valid cause to complain. Letitia had, in the most indefatigable manner, presided over the arrangements of internal affairs—not a thing was out of its place, all went on with mechanical regularity, and even Mr. Inglis had completed the requisites for his sporting diversions—in fine, every path was smoothed for gentility and happiness.

“ ’Tis very strange, papa,” said Letitia, one day, when the trio were luxuriously seated in that now elegantly furnished drawing-room, “ that neither the Rector

nor the Dashover family, nor any other of the country gentry have called—surely they cannot deem it *infra dig*, as I have heard you say, to associate with one who has honourably acquired his wealth in an honourable profession—they might as well say indeed that—”

“Don’t want ’em—nothing to be got at ’em—such a set of encumbered scarecrows,” said Squire Clynciere, at the same time shifting his position, as if it were uneasy, even when pillowed upon that well-stuffed ottoman, and his countenance the while belying the vaunted indifference which he professed in thus giving utterance to his awakened sentiments. “Those artless dwellers in obscure rusticity, could be no meet companions for those who have been brought up in the metropolis of the world—in the very pith and centre of civilization and intelligence, as I might say.”

“What horrid work if we were to be constantly bored with entertaining a set of red-gilled Cincinnatuses and unlettered Nimrods. Horrid bore to be sure! For my

part, I hope they will not interfere with us—we came here for quietude and retirement,” interrupted Mr. Inglis, who was listlessly perusing the columns of *Bell's Life*, and for a moment laying the paper down to thus deliver himself in what seemed rather strange opinions, considering the frame of mind in which the said Mr. Inglis repaired to their country-seat. “We Londoners when in the provinces want repose, not visiting—one has plenty of change in town, and if—”

“Yes, my dearest James, that is all very true with regard to you gentlemen,” interrupted his partner, “but for a lady to be in a sequestered place like this, without friends and acquaintances, is indeed very hard—that it is, James,” continued Mrs. Inglis, in a supplicating tone, as if to beseechingly coax her affianced into her own way of thinking.

“Now, Tishy, what friends and acquaintances can you possibly want when you have such an attentive husband as myself; amn't I always thinking how to make you happy; and can you be such a foolish girl

as to suppose that any Dashovers or any such folks could add to your felicity?"

"Well, but Lady Dashover, I am told, is a most estimable person, beloved by all the neighbourhood, and so genteel, and——"

"A fiddlestick, what can such country bumpkins know about any high standard of gentility, who seldom stir from the village where they were born, and whose ideas are as circumscribed as the patrimonial acres which they have inherited. Of the great world and its concerns they live and die in ignorance, eke out a kind of vegetative existence, and are in reality cyphers in the great account of human affairs. They may, it is true, set themselves up as pattern cards to their rustic neighbours, but their excellencies are meted to narrowed standards. I recollect when a school-boy, reading of one Heraclitus, who said 'that people sought truth in their own little worlds, and not in the great common world.' Now this classical illustration is quite to the point, and people like ourselves who have come from the great common world, cannot possibly gain much

from those who live, as the ancient observed, in their own little world; so don't, my dearest 'Tishy, let me hear any more repinings about the Dashover folks. I shall just keep on moving terms with Sir Harry, because his hounds come the nearest; but as for anything more I certainly shan't cultivate him. I have been told that both he and the rector make sad work of the king's English, and don't aspirate their *h's*. Impossible to be on particular terms with such folks," concluded Mr. Inglis, with all the flush of conviction that he had made a fine speech, not only for the edification of his wife, but also for the ears of his worthy father-in-law.

"Hark! there is a ring at the hall-door bell," said Letitia, under excitement, "who in the world can it be, some callers, I'll be bound? James, my love, do put away that vulgar paper, and do go, dearest, to your dressing-room, your head is like a mop, and if it be any visitors of consequence, really I should blush for your appearance."

Mr. James Inglis leisurely reared himself

into the erect position, and good-naturedly, at his wife's bidding, glided out by a side-door, for the special purpose of improving his outer man. Letitia hastily crammed *Bell's Life* under the sofa, and almost as suddenly subsided into aristocratic composure; and Squire Clinchere, to look more dignified, backed himself into the capacious red-morocco chair which stood in the corner, and took from the adjacent book-case, a huge antiquated tome, entitled *Clavis Mystica*, into the profundities of which he instanter dived.

In the course of a few moments the servant announced our friend the curate of the parish, the Reverend Mr. Meek; and this gentleman, ere he had taken a chair assured Mrs. Inglis that he would have done himself the pleasure of calling two or three weeks sooner, had he not been given to understand that they did not wish to receive visitors until all the renovations and beautifyings of late carried on at Elleringay Manor had been brought to a successful termination. Letitia received the divine



with a dignified front, indeed with something of a patronising air. The squire arose from his graceful position with as much solemnity, as if he had been rearing himself out of the chair at the Quarter-Sessions.

"I am, indeed, glad to make your personal acquaintance, Mr. Meek," said Gideon, condescendingly extending his hand, and formally shaking the curate's. Mr. Meek, who was one of the most guileless of men, smiled benignantly, and in his homely deportment, gave evidence of that urbane modesty and natural kindness which at all times found place in his heart, and were ever mirrored in his countenance.

"You have, indeed, effected wonderful improvements in the mansion; comparing it with my last visit here, it is scarcely possible to conceive it the same place, and really, Mrs. Inglis, all is finished in exquisite taste. I believe if Captain De Bohun's circumstances had allowed, he would have chosen the preservation of the old-fashioned furniture to modern luxuries, but there is no comparison. Things in these days are so constructed as to

combine elegance and comfort—in earlier ages they thought of nothing but solidity and duration.”

“Why you see, Mr. Meek,” said Gideon, somewhat sarcastically, “poor old De Bohun had lived so long out of the world, that his notions had become as shadowy and antiquated as the black oaken chairs and tables by which he was surrounded. When we came to the house, it gave the appearance of being one of the most sombre and depressing habitations that I ever beheld ; indeed, it was a wrecky, tumble-down, poverty-stricken place. It has cost me no small sum, though, to put it in anything approaching repair.”

“I hope you will like Elleringay, Mrs. Inglis,” observed the meek Mr. Meek, “I often say it is one of the most charming villages in the country. From every eminence you have a panoramic view varied and soft as a Claude landscape, and in proof of the salubrity of the locality, there are, relatively speaking, more advanced ages in the parish than in any of which I ever heard. The lofty range of hills towards the north shut

out the storms of winter, and in the hottest days of summer one can stroll amongst the shady woodlands, and be agreeably wafted with air, refreshing as the cool breezes of Bashan."

At this moment Mr. Inglis, with majestic bearing, entered the room.

"The Reverend Mr. Meek, my dear," said Letitia. The clergyman arose and returned the exalted bow of the wealthy Londoner.

Mr. Inglis had from his first residence at Elleringay Manor, determined on taking a high stand, and he wilily conceived that it was policy to receive the mild and inoffensive curate with a certain amount of dignity and gentlemanliness. The conversation turned on various topics, one and all of the new family taking care to descant on no commonplace subjects. The divine was a polite listener, and strove very commendably to ingratiate himself with the additional charges devolved on his cure. His observations at times were moulded to serious reflections, and he did not fail to remark that charity was one of the golden virtues, with an

inward hope that such rich parishioners would not forget to give liberally towards the assistance of those less fortunate creatures in the parish, at whose humble homes he was a frequent visitor, and with whose wants, temporal as well as spiritual, he was fully familiar. Mr. Meek had, perhaps, built too lofty notions of the new squire's generosity, and hoped for greater things on the part of the Elleringay poor, than he had a right to calculate upon. But then it had gone through the entire circle of the tea-table coteries in the neighbourhood, as a fact founded on undeniable authority, that Mr. Inglis had, by one transaction, made as much as a thousand pounds—that Squire Clynciere had bid for another estate in the county, and in fine, that the new comers were literally broken down with riches. Now under such glittering circumstances it was “no extravagant arithmetic” for Mr. Meek, in the overflowing goodness of his own liberal heart, to imagine that with people who already had so much, and who could at pleasure in a single day make such a boun-

tiful increase, a few score pounds could be neither here nor there—indeed, that the poor of the hamlet would now be taken care of with a kind of patriarchal solicitude.

After the curate had taken his exit, Gideon closed the *Clavis Mystica*, and quietly slid that ancient volume into its briefly vacated quarters, there, doubtless, to undisturbedly neighbour with companions as dusty and discoloured as itself, for many a month, unless extracted by chance, as now, to impress rural simplicities with the Squire's erudition.

"All humbug," said he, after a moment's pause, "for that man to say his rector never visits. As the possessor of this estate, I don't feel flattered at his sending the curate to do a piece of bare civility, when he ought to have demonstrated his polite intentions himself."

"From what I have seen of Mr. Meek, he is really an innocent-minded, amiable man, papa."

"The man's well enough, my dear; but lo! you can make a parson out of any inferior materials."

"Can't say that I was ever particularly partial to ecclesiastics," observed Mr. James Inglis, marching with stately step across the room, and then in subdued key whistling the last new air. "But," continued the whistler, for a moment interrupting his tune, "but I think this man is too gentle and unsophisticated to have any dissimulation in him. It is in the great world that expediences compel men to dissimulate." Then plunging his hands into his pockets, he ran over the last few bars of the air, and giving evidence that he fancied he had uttered an aphorism.

Letitia having heard that Lady Dashover and some other of the county gentlemen's wives and daughters in the neighbourhood were very zealous in getting up sick societies, Dorcas bags, and like charities, resolved to enter on the same respectable mode of employment. She at once commenced a systematic and periodical course of visiting, and in carrying out her very humane projects enlisted the willing services of Mr. Meek. Twice a-week the kitchen copper

was bubbling with soup for public distribution ; and every morning, in the side entrance hall of the mansion, might be seen the dejected and afflicted awaiting the pious ministrations of the good Mrs. Inglis. By her exertions and bountiful assistance, the parish relief was considerably mitigated. Every one soon applauded the charitable Letitia, and when they bore testimony to her public devotions, it was unanimously agreed that she was one of the best of good creatures. Squire Clynciere persevered in his schemes for agricultural reformation, and was fully bent on the development of mighty results. The accomplished son-in-law read sporting books, and resolved on becoming thoroughly acquainted with field diversions in all their fashions and phases.

The first of September was to Mr. Inglis truly a morning of more than common importance. It was the initiative of his sporting career. His equipment had been ordered by no ordinary care ; and his brace of double-barrelled Mantons and handsome pointers, were indeed creditable accompaniments. If

the most hypercritical eye surveyed this gentleman from head to foot, there was no feature—no particular to be found fault with, except, perhaps, there might be an excess of scrupulousness in his attire not always noticed in the thorough-bred country-born sportsman. His keeper exulted in a top-to-toe new outfit, and it is a mere enunciation of facts when we say, that as master and man triumphantly passed by the large bay-window where Letitia and Gideon had stationed themselves to behold James as he went to the field, that the said James Inglis and his attendant would well have served to sit for a print for Ackermann's. Covey after covey were raised, but, unfortunately, no feathery clouds floated on the bosom of the clear autumnal air; and after an infinitude of fields had been ranged, and countless birds made to whirr on the wing, Mr. Inglis had the chagrin to witness the ruddy September sun sink into his golden bowers beyond the western hills, when he had unremittingly toiled fourteen long hours, and only bagged what Christopher North would have called a

cheeper! To tell the truth, his homeward steps were made not only under less elasticity as regards the *physique*, but with less buoyancy of the *spirituelle*; and when the contents of the game-bag were exposed to view, not only Gideon's admiration, but Letitia's enthusiasm for field sports had undergone considerable abatement. No ill-luck like this at the rectory, as that well-beneficed ecclesiastic had that same morning donned his Theodore Beza to some purpose, and his deadly aim had actually burthened the broad back of Mr. Shears with seventeen brace and a-half, three hares, and a rabbit!

Mr. Shears was not only a privileged man with his spiritual master—he could not only fabricate white corded pants *secundum artem*, ring Elleringay church bells, discharge the united functions of clerk and sexton, and talk six hours without intermission on shooting, hunting, fishing, and the like; but he had, in his own peculiar kind of opinions, a tolerably correct, though crude knowledge of human nature, and, in his sagacious observations, he had sufficient tact to notice that

there was a something about the new family which created certain indefinable misgivings ; he was decidedly an aristocrat in his ideas, and, indeed, he openly averred that he did not like to behold others at the posts, and in the places of an historic, though sullen family. When he heard of the brilliant endeavours of Mr. Inglis on the first, he was more than ever convinced that the new folks were nothings ; because Mr. Shears ever associated sporting acquirements with true-born gentility, and, too, argued on a converse view of this question. On divers occasions during the season, he sarcastically reverted to the Cockney's bag on the First, and, it is to be feared, when under the stimulation of home-brewed, at the Plough, he had more than once expressed himself very contemptuously relative to the fresh occupants of the Hall. Mr. Inglis, however, was not there to hear the caustic railings thrown off by the ninth-part of a man.

In Elmorean and Andersonian phraseology, Mr. Inglis had provided for his stable three clever hunters ; each eight years old, in

prime condition, masters of their weight, conversant with their work, full of bone, and fleet as Eclipse. It might then very naturally be asked, and who or what can touch him? He verily intended showing, not only Sir Harry, but that "pot-bellied parson," as he very severely termed his reverend pastor, the way, when by good chance, a good fox, and a good scent day took them over a well-fenced hill and dale country. For the first meet in the neighbourhood he was in thorough readiness. Letitia was literally charmed at the appearance of her husband, when he first presented himself before her ocular organs, in his scarlet, and she secretly deplored that her James had not been brought up to the military profession, as she was convinced the army had lost in him a valiant soldier. High in hope, and determined on the performance of great achievements, Inglis trotted joyously along to the place of rendezvous; there was a good field and the morning was fine and bracing, though somewhat frosty to the feel. Sir Harry recognized the *novus homo* with a dignified nod, and we fear that Sir Harry had

allowed his prejudice to take deeper root than it ought in a cosmopolitan mind. His sympathy went with the banished De Bohuns; besides, he had, on one or two occasions suffered so severely from certain members of the legal profession, that he actually nurtured a sort of hatred towards the purchaser of Elleringay, even before he had ever set his eyes upon the man. The rector enunciated a brief "good morning, sir," and then throwing his armed heels into the sides of Boniface, cleared a somewhat awkward barrier, merely for the sake of giving the said Boniface a little amusement. Between Sir Harry and the parson certain significant looks and arch smiles were ever and anon to be noticed, and these manifestly at the expense of, and in derision at, the gentleman from the Manor House, who had made his *debut*, and looked as red and shining as a full-blown peony.

Reynard was at length disturbed from his lair, and away they went, helter-skelter, neck or nothing, Inglis hemmed in the very centre of the cavalcade. At the first leap he wriggled so portentously in his saddle that it was

manifest he would, ere long, be unshipped. The parson's watchful eye saw that the so-called clever hunter of his neighbour was an utter novice at the work, and that his rider was about as much out of place on pig-skin, as if seated on the woolsack. After having proceeded a short distance the clever hunter made a precipitate halt at a bull-finch, and his rider, obeying the law of a body thrown into a certain momentum, passed clear over the hedge, and was precipitated into a stagnant horsepond, the aquatic resort for progenies of ducks and geese. Never was heard such a hissing and quacking as when Mr. Inglis, in unceremonious manner, descended into the depths amongst them—hissing and quacking, and flapping of wings, the like was never ! The natives of that greenish-yellow pool were as much alarmed as if some meteoric projectile had come from the craters of the moon ; and then what a piteous spectacle the scarlet coat presented, bedaubed with mud and green scum ! So complete was this immersion that it was utterly impossible for the young squire to entertain any

more thoughts of the chase for that day, at least, and when the rector came up he very kindly assisted the gentleman to repair to a neighbouring farm-house, and insinuate his person between the blankets; which advice the consternated equestrian at once agreed to, and the parson, bidding him good morning, dashed Boniface along at a killing speed, and when he reached Sir Harry, their peals of laughter could be heard well-nigh half a league.

Mr. Inglis resolved on not leaving the blankets until dry clothes had been procured from home. But then, what story could be told to Letitia, who was in a condition that a serious alarm might give rise to very unwelcome consequences? After having recovered the shock of a cold bath at a cold season of the year, he indited a note—told the truth—blamed the horse, and concluded by reiterated assurances that the calamity consisted in nothing beyond the chance of a cold, and the surety of having taken the gloss off his scarlet. Letitia in perusing the note, like most sensitive and romantic young ladies,

would become hysterical, she screamed and called out for spirits of hartshorn, and said again and again she was sure her darling James had broken some of his bones. The bearer of the note, however, protested against Letitia's fears, and entered his declaration that the gentleman had sustained no bodily harm.

Crest-fallen, indeed, was the hunter when he turned in at the gates of his father's domain, and before he had passed the threshold of the mansion he stoutly resolved to abandon all description of field sports, by averring them to be unintellectual and dangerous amusements. Letitia in the exuberance of her joy received him with extended arms, and Gideon congratulated his enterprising son-in-law on matters not being worse.

Within forty-eight hours of this catastrophe, Mrs. Inglis gave birth to a still-born child—and, too, a boy! Squire Clynciere's lamentations were indeed heartfelt—he had ardently wished for a grandson—his ambition had long been fixed upon having an heir male to inherit the honours of his name, and found a house; alas! by this

foolish fox-hunting, and its mischance, his daughter had been brought to a premature delivery, and his expectations blasted. He sincerely hoped that James would, without more to do, and greater misfortunes, break up his sporting establishment, and find pleasure in more laudable and more profitable sources of excitement.

The ducking in the horse-pond was glorious news for Mr. Shears, and gave rise to a suffocating laughter on the part of that worthy when he chanced to join the rustic circle at the Plough. He declared he would have given the worth of the best ell of broad cloth he ever had the honour of cutting to have witnessed the joke. Shooting a *cheeper*, and being nearly drowned, were chronicled amongst the tailor's legends.

Time, with the inmates of the hall wore away, as with all other people, but there was a feeling of dissatisfaction experienced by each of the trio, which increased instead of becoming mitigated. It is true they had essayed to keep up their heads, and strenuously maintained a dignified position, but

they felt unappreciated, and not unfrequently had good cause to be mortified. Gideon strongly resolved to have no annoyance with any public duties, and declared he would make himself comfortable in utter disregard of those around him. In no great length of time he issued orders that his implements of husbandry should be disposed of, and the land rejoined to the farm, to which it was originally attached.

"'Tis all nonsense," said he one day, pettishly, "giving one'self a vast deal of trouble for so called public good, and what do the public care for all a generously-spirited man may do?—not a fig. I have, at no small expense, shown my tenants new modes of cultivation, but they are as addle-headed and obtuse as the nether millstone. What satisfaction is that to me in sweating my brains for a parcel of ignoramuses, who are so contracted and pig-headed in their notions. To drive common sense into their rough and unenlightened pates is as difficult as to put vitality into automatons, or lay figures. I will take good care of one thing,

however, that they pay their rents, if they don't, sure as my name is Gideon Clynychiere, they shall have practical illustrations of the meaning of *fieri facias*, and if they like to go on in error, why they are quite welcome."

Mr. Clynychiere had become disgusted with that want of enthusiasm amongst his neighbours. He had entertained a hope that those desiring information would have flocked around him as agriculturists do around the Rev. Mr. Huxtable or Mr. Mechi at their model farms; but no such thing, the Eller-ingaytonians were impenetrable and case-hardened in their long inherited methods of dressing the soil, which had been by their grandfathers tilled—their reformation was hopeless.

CHAPTER X.

"He sighs—for after all, by slow degrees,
The spot he loved has lost the power to please.
To cross his ambling pony day by day,
Seems at the best but dreaming life away ;
The prospect such as might enchant despair,
He views it not, or sees no beauty there ;
With aching heart and discontented looks
Returns at noon to billiards or to books ;
But feels, while grasping at his faded joys,
A secret thirst of his renounced employs."

COWPER.

"Papa," said Letitia one evening, when seated over the fire, "I've been thinking I shall give up my charities ; the poor people are so ungrateful, and it is so very unpleasant one's visiting their dirty hovels. I have given them soup, clothing, coals, money,

medicine, and have tried to instil into them religious principles, and Mr. Meek has endeavoured to do the same, but our united efforts have ended in no satisfactory results. Though I have made quite a slave of myself amongst the wretches, and done so much for them, yet, for all my exertions, I never hear of any particular credit which I have got either amongst them or with any body else; not that I care for public opinion, yet I do think when people of my own standing condescend to enter such scenes of squalor, dirt, and disgust, there ought to be some little gratitude for so much self-sacrifice, and for such an amount of volunteered services. But I shall give it all up—that I shall,” concluded the benevolent Letitia emphatically.

“The urgent advice of your father, my dear, is at once to carry out that very wise and wholesome determination. For my own part, to tell the truth, I have for some time past deemed you a great simpleton for giving yourself so much trouble. It is not the first instance I have known of amateur charity-hunting. Now to descend for a moment into

dispassionate argument. Don't I pay a large annual contribution to their necessities in the way of poor-rates? Hav'nt they, when really destitute, bed and board at the work-house? Hav'nt they a parish doctor? Ain't they buried respectably; and isn't the very same service read over them as for their betters, and all that? Is it not the general admission of all well-informed people, that the poor of this country are provided for—by legislative enactment, mind—provided for, I say, with a higher scale of living than the poor of any other country? Charities may be so liberally dispensed, as actually to set a premium upon pauperism; precisely as in many of our prisons the generous fare is unquestionably an inducement to the commission of crime.

“I only wish that I had been in Parliament, I would have laboured desperately for a different state of things relative to these matters—'tis a shame that these anomalies have not been considered. Who'll thank you, I should like to know, for the charitable bubbling of your kitchen copper with its

savoury meats and dried herbs—for your laudable endeavours to sow virtue and produce good order amongst vice and filth—aye, and for running the daily risk of contracting some pestilential malady? Who? why nobody. I have not lived so long in the world as to be unable to see that public sympathy, public-spiritedness, and the like, are sheer humbug. If such vain-glorious folks as Lady Dashover entertain a morbid desire to be spoken of up-hill and down-dale as shining examples of sanctity, I can only say, don't you, my dear Letitia, lend yourself to such hypocritical display—to such pharisaical nonsense.”

“Folks say Lady Dashover is an angelic-minded woman—so truly religious and—”

“Folks say, observe you, ”Tishy—yes, folks not unfrequently say a great deal of humbug,” replied Gideon, sarcastically. “There is a fashion in such fulsome demonstrations as in everything else. Yes, religion has become a fashion, and especially amongst a set of simple-minded, sentimental women. Wasn't it currently reported that our new vicar in

town was literally run after by the ladies of his congregation so long as he remained a bachelor ; and didn't you hear it stated again and again that he received as presents from the pious fair no less than nineteen silver tea-pots, two dozen pairs of worked slippers, and other things without end and count ? When he did at length marry one of them, the tide of attention and presents then set in full flow towards the young curate, and the poor nervous creature was well nigh waylaid by calculating matrons and devotional misses. For my part, I hate all this cant ; and though I have always been a thorough, out-and-out churchman, yet I don't pretend to be better than others, and have no longing taste to be cried up as a would-be-pietist."

"No doubt Lady Dashover is flattered by the country papers eloquently speaking of her blanket and beef distributions—her visiting societies and so forth, and when the whole neighbourhood rings with her holy doings, she of course is not deaf to popular applause, notwithstanding her assumed disregard of all such commendations. I

agree with you, papa, that there is a great deal of insincerity and cant in all this—indeed, I very much doubt Lady Dashover's hidden motives," rejoined Letitia, in a denouncing tone of contemptuousness for Lady Dashover's good works.

"There's so much deception now-a-days, that it is impossible to decide on people's motives. I learnt, however, from the ample pages of human nature—and you know Letitia your father was always renowned for his penetration into character—that to doubt and disbelieve every one is the right way, and if you do chance to stumble on a pure, out-and-out honest'un, only then look upon him as an exception, and fit (if there were such an institution), and fit, I say to be put into a museum of the moral world."

It was the misfortune, nay, more, the sinfulness of Gideon Clynciere, to entertain unjust and slippery notions in all that regarded true benevolence, and real religion. To suit his own feelings of avarice and narrow-mindedness, he railed against the good, and laughed at virtue. A disbeliever in the

purity of intention, on the part of those whose high toned souls sought to alleviate suffering, and to extend the hand of sympathy towards forsakenness, and want—at the professions of the honestly pious, he was the ready satirist and unremitting scoffer—and the active spirit of detraction was ever ready to rise up within him, and level darts at those whose very worthiness inspired his hatred. Deluded and disingenuous man,—as if in this wide world, in which he dwelt, there were no nobleness—no virtue—no sincerity—as if forsooth all he met were formed of that base mould from whence had sprung Gideon Clynciere!

Feeling secure in the abundance of his own treasures, he heard not the cries of the fatherless, heeded not the tears of the widow, nor beheld the beggar's sores. To penetrate dens of squalor, and haunts of penury, was to him a vitiated taste, and those who did so were in his false and flinty-hearted reasonings, fools or hypocrites. Like many other worldly calculators, he ever sought the *quid pro quo* for whatever he speciously

performed, and when he did chance to do anything in the shape of a kind action, he exacted its worth in demonstrations of gratitude, or in some tangible return. If the interrogatives of conscience raised their whisperings in his bosom, he essayed to stifle such pain-giving questions, and tried to lull the inward monitor to repose. But a disturbing reflection would at times make the appeal within his breast, to say how it was that a stream of good fortune had placed him and his family in the aged halls of a now exiled line—and why it was that he was not the poor starvling to shiver uncared for on a bed of straw.

He might try to refer these astounding differences to the self merit of a free agency, but the still small voice, even in his own blunted and insensible mind, gave the impress of a calm conviction, that men's good and ill, are ordered by a power superior to their own ignoble selves. A convenient way indeed for such hireling and debased men as yourself Gideon, to sneer at religion, and call it a fashion. It is much to be regretted

that into such fashion you never fell—had you done so, perchance your future history had been less embittered. Is it not better to leave other's consciences to themselves and their God, than for impious men like yourself, to rise up as the severe censors of those who shame you by their worth? If Lady Dashover were insincere, her insincerity could do no harm, whilst her offices of kindness were advantageous acts to the recipients of her favours. It is to be feared, even upon the most superficial judgment, that Letitia had commenced her deeds of alms-doing, not with that sincerity, for the want of which she erroneously impugned Lady Dashover. But it is one of the failings common to our fallen nature, to note others' faults, and be blind to our own.

In the process of time not only Mr. Inglis, but also his revered father-in-law, felt overcome with *ennui*. The irksomeness of a dull and unvarying country life became hard of endurance. Gideon's active faculties sought some unrest as a relief from the stagnant tedium of unoccupied hours, and Inglis had

now began to sigh for metropolitan excitation, as a change from that weary monotony under which he chafed. Neither of the twain had any refined or intellectual tastes—no resources within themselves on which to fall back. The matter-of-fact concerns associated with gain, were stimulants suited to both, and sensuous pleasures had a syren charm for the younger. London was the place of all others fitted to the gratification of such minds. Gideon on his retirement imagined that he could sink into dignified repose, and become at once a being of entire enjoyment, but with all his vaunted knowledge of human nature, he reflected not that long confirmed habits, and a life passed in rearing up some darling idol to the fancy, are not with comfort to be renounced at once—he remembered not the abrupt cessation of the functions of any faculties cannot be achieved precipitately. But Gideon was not the first who felt disappointed in the new life which well nigh half a century of labour had procured. The prospect in the distance had ever looked enchanting, but

when entered upon the illusion became apparent. As to the affianced of his child, the giddy rounds of metropolitan dissipation and frivolous amusements, were regarded by him as things the most worth living for.

"Father," said Inglis one day in a firm and endearing tone as they were walking together in the park surrounding the mansion (he ever used this filial appellative when about to carry a point)—"Father," repeated he after a brief pause, "I have recently been revolving a project in my mind, but I know not whether you will or will not accede to my proposals, yet—"

"What are they?—what are they, James?" impatiently asked the elder.

"Well, Sir, I cannot fail to observe that you like myself are not in love with an idle life; it seemed all very pleasant at first to have nothing to do but lay upon one's oars; yet really this Elleringay is a dull place, and I have been cogitating that a scheme might be hit upon, to the advantage of both. I now it is true run up once a month to town, and have a little to occupy my thoughts, so

that I am in a somewhat superior position to yourself. Now don't you think that we could enter into some commercial speculations? I am sure with a vigilant eye on the market, and making a venture upon right things, that a very handsome annual amount might without much trouble be realized. For several years I have been accustomed to attend to commercial matters, and am quite *au fait* at all that sort of thing. I have mentioned this proposition more with reference to you than myself mind, but I certainly am of opinion that in the anticipation of morning letters, watching the quotations, and so forth, you would find a pleasurable relief from the unmeaning and stagnant existence you have of late been spending, and"—

"I will think it over, James—I'll think it over," said Gideon, drawing himself up to a full stop, and gazing for a few moments earnestly on the ground.

"Now suppose I were to take the harass and real management of the concerns, and you to come up to overhaul accounts, say

once in two months, or perhaps once a quarter. Of course I ought to go up every alternate week for the transaction of matters with our agents. I do believe, sir, to enter spiritedly into the scheme, that we soon might lay another estate to the broad acres of Elleringay. You legal gentlemen are so slow in accumulating property. 'Tis in the mercantile world that colossal fortunes are acquired."

"There is much common sense in what you say James, I am constrained to confess."

"You in all human probability have many years to live," continued Inglis, half smiling at the success of his arguments, "and if you will accede to my wishes, I feel certain you would see the day when your rent-roll would double any Sir Harry Dashovers. Don't allow me to unfairly bias your opinion; think for yourself, yet at the same time I am convinced the scheme is a desirable one—one that would add to your own comfort—aye and to your existence too!" affectionately concluded the speaker, as he with piercing glance took a recon-

noitering gaze into the features and very soul of Gideon.

After mature deliberation the avaricious solicitor resolved on entering upon commercial speculation, and his son repaired to town in order to arrange certain preliminaries. They entered into an unrestricted partnership, and Gideon resolved to audit the accounts at least every quarter. The title-deeds of the estate were placed in the hands of their bankers, in order to draw a large amount without delay when golden opportunities presented themselves.

Matters now went on very smoothly, and Inglis threw his entire energies into the very agreeable occupation of amassing glittering heaps with the mere trouble of driving a few bargains, and his less active partner indulged in day dreams of the great things to be accomplished, by, as he termed it, taking time by the fore-lock, and vigilantly watching the markets. Letitia had most strenuously opposed these new pursuits, but all her arguments were vain, and she was at length compelled to submit to the wiser decisions of

her parent and husband. She was decidedly of opinion that it was more genteel to reside on their estate, without any such vulgar engagements as money making, and she was sure if the thing got out they would be accounted as nothing more or less than retired London trades-people, or rather as trades-people unretired.

"These two hundred chests of Congou paid well," said Inglis to Gideon one evening, as the trio sat over the back parlor fire. "Five hundred and thirteen pounds, sixteen shillings and two pence three farthings made in a single transaction, without any trouble!"

Gideon smiled, and hit the bowl of his inverted pipe a ra-ta-tap on his thumb nail, and then refilled it out of a leaden jar, held on his knee, and at length enunciated a monosyllabical "yes," and was about to go on when Letitia interrupted.

"What, my dear James! do you mean to assert that you and papa have turned tea-dealers?"

"We have done a little in that line, Tishy, and I wish we had done more."

"A nice handle all this will be for the Dash-overs. They are sure to hear of it. I had hoped that both you and papa were more of gentlemen than to turn such dealers," continued she, in manifest disgust.

"Letitia, my dear, I never did doubt your consummate ability at greening gherkins, cutting out shirts, and all that sort of thing," said Gideon very gravely, and somewhat reprovingly, "but I must insist that you are utterly incompetent of judging on matters which are at present receiving the due attention of James and myself. Are you not aware that in these days money can do anything? Why, there was a button maker in London not very long ago who purchased a large estate, and arn't there in our own neighbourhood very fine, dashing, and would-be aristocratic fellows, whose fathers were stocking weavers and treacle dealers? Don't the peers of the realm marry into merchant families, aye, when it is tacitly understood that the match is got up with an almost entire reference to pounds, shillings, and pence? Depend upon it, that in these days, wealth

will procure everything but life. Pray what difference is there between speculating in *divs* and *consols*, and in tea and bees' wax? Foolish girl, none whatever. I have resolved to lay to our estate before I die many goodly acres, so don't you talk ridiculously; and, indeed, I must seriously desire that you will henceforth not interfere with the 'concerns of great pith and moment' in which your husband and myself are about to be engaged."

Thus did the father deliver himself, and in an imperious tone and attitude not to be mistaken by the consternated Letitia. Poor Letitia! her pride was wounded, and when she thought how Lady Dashover and company would exult, she was indeed annoyed. Her husband's visits to London now became very frequent, and after a while it might, without the fear of contradiction, be said that he spent full half his time in the metropolis, a change which his young wife did not regard as the dictates of that pure affection which he had hitherto professed, nor as one which a youthful partner ought to think of

unconcernedly. But she had no other alternative, and if she did venture to remonstrate against this breaking up of domestic quiet, she was speedily silenced by her parent, whose over-weening vanity and thirst for gain, bid him sacrifice everything to his own gratifications.

Favouring breezes filled the sails of speculation, and wafted on the partnership towards the wished-for haven of fortune. Father and son were in high spirits, and the occupants of Elleringay were manifestly destined for still greater advancement. In London Jemmy boasted of his seat in the country, and in the country Gideon vaunted of his immense profits. Again and again did the latter apostrophize to himself, and declare what a noodle he had been to waste so much of his life in those soporific and dismal chambers in Lincoln's Inn Fields, when he might by entering into commercial speculations have been worth more by tens of thousands—nay, when he might undoubtedly, with his acumen, have been one of the merchant princes. But, argued he, people

only find out great truths when they are going to die.

Now as Mr. Inglis had by his marriage, and by his present extensive concerns, become a man of some importance, he resolved during his town visits to merge a little more into the aristocratic districts, in other words, to penetrate the regions of the West End, and by one scheme or another he was at length proposed and voted into one of the second-class clubs. He had, like many other gentlemen of his kind of mind, notions amounting to conviction, that it was a very respectable thing to speak of my club, to write letters from the club, and so forth; besides, as this great change in his life had unavoidably driven him much from his own fire-side, it was expedient that he should find a temporary home in town, where he could comfortably wile away his leisure hours.

He had not been a member long before he spoke in the most eulogistic terms of these institutions, and avowed his protest that they were the most rational and praiseworthy

inventions going. To be a member of a club was, in his opinion, to be living in the great common world, where a man found choice society, rubbed off antiquated notions, and really saw what was going on in every day life. It is true he had heard the arguments against them, to wit, that wives, mothers, sisters, and so forth, had towards these establishments an invincible hatred, but he reasoned within himself that it was the nature of the other sex to love opposites, and thwart the sounder understandings of their lords; *ergo*, they ought not to be noticed.

Soon did he become a gay and fashionable loungeur on the ample steps of that noble pile, and in no great length of time he was to be observed cracking jokes, and joining in the loud laughing ha! ha! with whiskered dandies and moustached idlers. The club became more attractive than the 'Change, and he learnt to chatter with more delight on the second-hand scandal of St. James' or Pall Mall, than seriously talk with brokers and money makers. To have discoursed with his new acquaintances on the qualities

of Congou, or like utilitarian articles, would have been to disgust his ring-fingered hearers, and absolutely horrify these "silken sons of pleasure." His doings east of Temple Bar now began to be performed with little zest, and we fear he did not keep that lynx-eyed watch on the markets which had been his wont. When he went down to Eller-ingay, some little exertion was required; he then had to act his part at dissimulation, and throw the dust in the eyes of his revered partner, which task, to tell the truth, Jemmy had the tact and adroitness to very cleverly manage.

The success which had attended the first few transactions of the firm had the most benumbing effect on the reflective faculties of Gideon, and he verily thought that he might with confidence place his existence in the clever and honest hands of his son-in-law. At the expiration of the first two or three quarters Gideon did go to London and examine the accounts, but really it was a useless errand, as everything was balanced up to a farthing, and very consoling sums of

profit placed on the creditor side at their bankers. Now where was the use, at his time of life, of subjecting himself to long and fatiguing journeys, when he had such an acute and efficient representative? Certainly not; therefore Gideon contented himself with staying at home, watching the markets, and hearing the good accounts which the irre-doubtable James from time to time carried down to this country seat.

When Inglis returned from town the elder part of the firm was most impatient to hear of the lucky hits which the former had made, and these inquiries were perseveringly asked, not unfrequently before even Letitia could have a few affectionate words with her newly-arrived spouse. But Jemmy was a loquacious man, and he soon detailed a mass of particulars which he well knew would fall like honeyed drops on his father's tympanum. Letitia only detested this new line of life, and really deemed it anything but what a comparatively newly-wedded wife ought to expect. She essayed to bring about some alteration by giving, from time to time, cur-

tain lectures, and as a wind-up to these tried the additional effect of tears. But her affianced's rejoinders were ever based on affection, and his reasonings made it appear that all this self-sacrifice on his part was chiefly for her good, and those whom they might have to look up to them for support. He declared that nothing was more averse to his feelings than being obliged to leave her so often, but he then observed it was the old man's peculiar wish, and it was as well to gratify it, seeing that, in the common course of things, his earthly existence could not be long. Yes, Jemmy averred that he had much rather stay at home in the calm enjoyment of her delightful society—and simple-minded Letitia believed him!

CHAPTER XI.

"Sweet Sir Fopling! you have so much wit!"

POPE'S SATIRES OF DONNE (SAT. IV).

A COLD, raw spring morning in London, is as disagreeable as a cold, raw spring morning in any other part of the kingdom; and well may foreigners exclaim against the damp, miserable days—the dirt, drizzle, and uncomfortableness so often to be encountered in the metropolis of the world. It hath, and not without a certain amount of truthfulness, been observed, that the sombre, unsmiling, grumbling, matter-of-fact character of John Bull is not a little the result of his geographic position, and that a gloomy, often unpropitious climate, has the effect of stirring up the

bile in his blood, and goading him on to exertion and enterprise, whilst the children of more genial and sunnier lands are busy with their pastimes and pleasures, and if less ambitious and less mighty, are perhaps not less contented and happy.

Well, it was during one of these mornings in question, that Inglis with stately step marched into his club, walked up to the blazing sea-coal fire, reviewed his physiognomy in the mirror, bristled up his hair, rubbed his hands, and then augustly called for a mutton cutlet, tomato sauce, and a pint of sherry. He felt cold and chilly, not in the best of humours, and his stomach reminded him of that trite truism, that nature abhors a vacuum. With an expedition only to be witnessed in like metropolitan establishments, the refreshment was placed before him precisely at the expiration of twelve minutes from the time of his deliberate issue of the order, and to tell the truth the cutlet was done to a nicety, and the sherry looked as if from Martinez's cobwebby catacombs.

Mr. Inglis threw down the morning paper,

which he had for a few moments been reading, and in good earnest set to work at the demolition of the savoury things before him. Having appeased this natural call for the renovation of his corporeal being, he again threw his eyes over the columns he had previously glanced at, and at the same time squared himself round in more convenient posture to catch the comfortable warmth of, the flaming fire.

In no great length of time a tall and elegantly-dressed man, who at a glance might be four or five and thirty, approximated the table near to which Jemmy had taken his leisurely position. The stranger was attired in such a studied costliness of costume that it was difficult of conception how he could be dressed in a more expensive manner. He unbuttoned a short military cloak, and carelessly threw it over the back of an unoccupied chair, and then became seated. His features, though somewhat strongly lined, were by no means repulsive, but rather inclined to the pleasing, and his neatly-arranged hair, curled whiskers, and methodically turned moustache,

added to his otherwise trim and orderly appearance ; and the air of dignity which he assumed by no means set upon him unbecomingly. His white hand, fair complexion, and nonchalance of bearing, inferred that he had not been one of fortune's unfavoured offspring whose lot is doomed to toil. His erect carriage and disciplined demeanour were *en militaire*, and the casual observer might at once decide him to belong to the profession of arms. Inglis eyed the stranger as if admiringly, and the stranger cast divers furtive glances at Inglis.

"Horrible a—morning, real a—English day," calmly observed the stranger, fearfully elongating the imperfectly pronounced words in which he delivered the above sentiments, and addressing himself in a most polite and ingratiating manner.

"Dreadfully damp and uncomfortable, indeed, sir,—what one terms a rheumatic morning," returned James, with a complacent smile, evidently relishing the elegant freedom of the handsome man, whom he recognized as having once or twice beheld before, and

whom he doubted not was a person of considerable importance.

"A—ah—well a—said, Monsieur,—well said, but a—'pon honour I don't a—want the cursed complaint. A—waiter, bring me a bottom of a—brandy hot a—water and a ham a—sandwich. Deuced unpleasant thing rheumatism, and I recollect when travelling with Count a—Wallewski through Northern Europe a—that nobleman said pure cognac was the a—best possible preventative."

Inglis opened his eyes and dilated the white still more broadly when he discovered that he had the honour of conversing with the friend of a count, and with one who had made the tour of Northern Europe. He was all smiles and attention, and this mutual pleasure expressed in the features had the effect of lengthening the conversation. When the twain had become a little more familiar, Mr. Inglis ventured to ask the handsome personage before him if he were not a foreigner? The latter very good-humouredly withdrew from his left vest pocket a small mother-of-pearl card-case, and placed in the

hand of the former the address of *The Count de Puffendoff*. Mr. Inglis read that name and title with inward amazement, and emulating his newly-made friend's example, exchanged his own card, which announced himself to be *Mr. Inglis, Elleringay Manor*.

"I'm a—very proud to a—make your personal acquaintance. If I remember right I had the honour of adding my unit to the ayes for your admission into our club some six weeks ago."

Mr. Inglis said, in reply, that he was, also, extremely glad to have thus agreeably become known to so distinguished an individual as the Count de Puffendoff, and thanked him for having been one to vote for him, when balloted into the very distinguished institution to which he now belonged.

"I a—joined this a—club, *mon cher*," remarked the Count de Puffendoff, delightfully elongating his accents, "a—because I'm a single man, and so long as I a—stop in England don't want a—the confounded bother of a retinue of servants. Besides—a 'tis deuced lonely for a bachelor to be a—shut up

in London without a—companions. My own habits are a—somewhat social, and as during a—recent years I have been a cosmopolite ; I now feel these a—sort of places more in keeping a—with my tastes—aw ! ”

“ You can certainly have many comforts at a club not procurable at a private house, and ”—

“ Oh, yes ! I fully agree with you ; society—eatables—damme, everything you wish on the instant—no grumbling, no wife to please—I beg your pardon, perhaps you are more fortunate than myself—pray are a—you affianced ; hooked, as the common expression goes ? ”

“ Yes ! yes—Count Puffendoff, I was long free, but caught at last,” replied Jemmy, as if he regretted he were not still one of the wide world’s denizens, like the unfettered Count.

“ Well, well, *mon cher*, ’tis an old saying, ‘ all’s for the best ; ’ but, on the continent, where much a—of my life has been spent, the upper classes do things much better. They marry for matters of propriety ; but it is

tacitly understood that both shall not be so tied and a—tethered down as—a in England. They—a, as you would say, are—a not so tightlaced—and lo! 'tis a better plan. Damme, who would a—marry not—a to improve his position and estate? Methinks it a—would be very impolitic to take a wife a—without a dowry. There are such things done by moon-struck wretches, I believe. One can only pity such weakness—aw!”

“I have often heard that in France husbands will not be pinned to their spouses, like children to their dolls.”

“Of course they are not a—so foolish; they go where they like; do as they like, and are not a—the slaves of a—whimsical wives.”

“I think Count, I have acted prudently of late; I have absented myself a good deal from home, and doing this pretty early in the matrimonial career is likely to save much altercation afterwards.”

“It is a—great wisdom to a—commence as one means to a—go on, *mon cher*,” returned the smiling and elegant Puffendoff.

“I’m determined I’ll do as I like; every

man has a right to do so, and, in the great common world, Count, men learn the methods of wisdom."

"Certainly, a—certainly—'tis the prerogative of every man of spirit to act according to a—his fancy. 'Tis all very fine for females to rail against such noble institutions as this, but if a—you consider for a moment their arguments are a—based on selfishness. Many of 'em would, by their will, never allow their poor devils of husbands to stir from the chimney corner—and not a few wish to have them hung to them like a *chatelaine*. I can only answer for myself by declaring that no spouse should ever rule me into such petticoat subjection—aw!"

"When women rule, their lords are cyphers—or if not cyphers at the first, in time become so."

"Precisely—precisely, *mon cher*—become nonentities—mere tools and playthings to please capricious wills, and a—ridiculous fancies," said the sage-looking Puffendoff, waving his hand with an irredoubtable air of self-complacency.

"Well, I can only say, Count Puffendoff, that as I have had the honour of becoming a member here, and as the monotonous existence of my country seat is often hard of endurance, and as I have concerns of deep moment to frequently demand my presence in the metropolis, I shall make it as much as possible my home. I was always fond of society, and never did like obscuring myself out of the way of everything and everybody—therefore I don't mean, as my wife would have me, to be buried alive in the regions of dull rusticity, with no better associates than country bumpkins, whose only fluency is on the stable and the kennel."

"The a—wisdom of such resolve is—a—most unquestionable, and I can only say that as you are—a—something of a stranger amongst us here, if I can introduce you to my small circle of Clubites, I—a—shall—a—be most happy—aw!"

"You are, indeed, very kind, Count Puffendoff, and I can but observe that our thus becoming acquainted, by the free-and-easy terms of unaffected good-fellowship, without

the ceremonious roundabout of a formal introduction, is to me a most pleasing reflection, and I sincerely trust that this fortuitous acquaintance may ripen into a more intimate friendship."

"My pleasure is as great as your own, and—a—I trust it will be so. Let me see, 'tis a—half-past one o'clock—my cabriolet will be at the door. Good morning, Mr. Inglis; you'll excuse my precipitate departure, *mon cher*, won't you, as I have an appointment with my Lord Squanderfield at a quarter to two, and Squanderfield lives up in Portman Square? Good morning—more chat when we—a—next meet," said the Count, shaking Jemmy's hand very cordially, and beaming on him the most benignant smile.

"Deuced agreeable, gentlemanly fellow is the Count," soliloquised Jemmy to himself, after Puffendoff had leisurely thrown his military cloak over his arm, and made his exit at the further end of the coffee-room; "deuced gentlemanly fellow," reiterated he, after a thoughtful pause. "Ah! this con-

firms what I have often heard, only get into a West-end Club, and you get into first rate society. What a fool that Dashover, or that pot-bellied parson would appear in conversation with men like this—poor, narrow-minded creatures are they about Elleringay; indeed, in information and social enlightenment, a few removes more elevated than the painted skinned subjects of King Caractacus know nothing save of the adroit destruction of the beasts of the field. Yes! I shall cultivate *him*. Call on Lord Squanderfield! Doubtless, I shall one of these days have the honour of his Lordship's acquaintance. Talk about Clubs being of no indirect use—why they can conduct to a peerage, through *finesse* and long membership. Confound Elleringay and rural obscurity; let me, I say, live in London!”

It is quite unquestionable that at this moment, James Inglis, Esq., of Elleringay Manor, internally congratulated himself on having had those gentlemanly aspirations, whereby he had placed himself in juxtaposition with dashing Counts, and had become

not far removed from the friendship of peers of the realm. To turn his mind's eye from these very flattering visions to the more utilitarian everyday life of commerce and the 'Change, was anything but agreeable, and he vowed within himself that on the very first propitious opportunities, he would make some bold ventures, so as to have done with all such pursuits as city business and money-making. Indeed, after he had realized another twenty thousand, he declared he would bother himself no more—no, not to gratify the favorite avarice of his father-in-law, nor even of King Pepin himself, were that worthy's shade to solicit his continuance in his present vocations.

On returning to Elleringay after this visit, not only Gideon could perceive some difference in his deportment, but even poor, guileless Letitia thought there was something of an alteration in her James.

"Well, James," said Gideon, "how do matters go on in the great city?"

"First rate—first rate."

"This report of Napoleon's escape from

St. Helena made any difference in the stocks?" asked the father.

"None whatever—none whatever, as every one knows that the little man is a kind of *Prometheus vinctus*, and that he'll never return to harass Europe according to his wont. Sir Hudson will keep too smart a look-out upon him."

"I was afraid there would, by such a report, be some depreciation in the three per cents."

"Much more likely that they'll jump up, now that there is such a prospect of a long peace," replied Inglis, with much assumed wisdom in his deliverance.

"Well, well, my boy, you know the best how advantageously to turn the penny. Remember I have now left all to you—repose my entire confidence, not only in your head, but in your heart."

"And I hope, Sir, my endeavours will be crowned with success."

"God grant it may be so, James."

"I have heard *sub rosa* of one or two things likely to be brought into the market;

and if I do get the chance, I'll have a good haul. As well to have thousands as hundreds, eh father?" said the son-in-law, very archly and very affectionately.

"Only take care and know all the *pros* and *cons*, and don't make too bold a venture. Recollect money once lost is not so easily replaced."

James acquiescingly nodded his head, and merely observed that he had been too many years on 'Change to be easily taken in, and assured Gideon that one of those days he would surprise him.

It would be no more than the fact to assert, that Letitia of late was not in her wonted high spirits. She was often to be seen set in gloomy reflection, and on more than one occasion Gideon found her alone indulging in fast-flowing tears. He essayed to divine the cause of this grief; but his inquiries were unanswered. Like most men who have arrived at his time of life, he did not think so much of his child's disquietude as he once would have done, and the circumstance soon passed from his memory. His thoughts were

too absorbingly rivetted to the golden heaps which his own wisdom and his son's exertions were amassing in London, to give any particular attention to less important matters that might be taking place around him. He attributed this moping of Letitia to the oddities and peculiarities of the female character, and dismissed her quite, as he would have kicked off an old shoe.

"I have been thinking," said Inglis, during his sojourn at Elleringay, "I have been thinking, 'Tishy,'" repeated he, "that as I have so many places to call at when in London, I shall commence a cabriolet something after the fashion of my friend's, the Count de Puffendoff; and as it—"

"Friend who?" interrupted Letitia, surprised.

"The Count de Puffendoff, my dear."

"Well, as you wish, James," calmly rejoined she, with a subdued sigh.

"Now tell me what it is, 'Tishy, that makes you so sad—this glumpish dispiritedness which I have painfully observed in you of late, makes me miserable. Tell me your desires, and with such I'll comply."

"To be what you vowed you would be, before I cast myself with your destiny."

"How? In what way—tell me?" asked the husband with a conscious blush.

"To be changeless in your love."

"Am I not? In what conduct, thought, or action have I falsified my vows? Have I ever been cross or unkind? You wrong me, Letitia, if you say so. My unvarying hope has been to comfort and make you happy."

"The coldness of neglect is worse in woman's heart to bear than a few hasty expressions thrown from the tongue, when temper's feverishness for a moment heats the blood."

"Neglect, say you?"

"Yes, I repeat the word—I say neglect!" continued Mrs. Inglis, emphatically.

"If by any aspect such hath appeared to you, it has been an innocent error of the judgment, no crime of the heart."

"Let me appeal to you," rejoined Letitia, "would a loving husband, one who had wedded his wife for true affection, absent himself as you have done of late; and—and have I,

simple woman as you may deem me, no good cause for raising this complaint?"

"Letitia, my dearest, pray put the bridle on your tongue; angry words with those who have been so briefly married, are for future happiness better avoided. 'Tis a wise saying to beware of the first quarrel."

"If you wedded me for my dowry, remember you have done two things evilly, you have debased yourself, and wronged another."

"I married you for a wife, not for your fortune. You reproach me for my occasional periods of absence, but as I have observed before, I endure this privation of being driven from your side, not to gratify my own selfish schemes of advantage or ambition, but for your good, as well as my own, and more, for them with whom we may be blest, and whom nature and right demand that we should provide for and protect. Besides, as I before have told you, it is your parent's wish, and surely in these motives, and my compliance with him, my intentions and my conduct, from you, of all people, demand a kinder, better return."

"My fortune alone is sufficient for happiness, and if you possess as much as you declared you did to my father, our means are doubly ample. From your tenor of argument you deem gold more to be envied than happiness."

"You mistake me, Letitia, 'tis our offsprings' welfare which has urged me to these concerns, not my thirst for gold."

"Well, let us cry a truce to this flippancy, as I would this conversation had not ensued."

"Aye, and in this my wife, you have uttered my own sentiments."

"A wound that's probed, is often a wound made worse."

"Come, come, look not so gloomily. My energies to add to our means shall be bold and redoubled; and then, my darling, I shall be your dutiful and non-absent slave for life," said Jemmy, looking Letitia in the face, and at the same time curling his lip with a smile of affection.

The rising tear had started into Letitia's eye, but she brushed, as if unconsciously away, the tell-tale drop, and entered upon

some more agreeable topic of conversation.

In a few moments the servant announced the Reverend Mr. Meek, who had made a call with the ulterior view of persuading Mrs. Inglis to resume that solicitude for the poor, and generous charity, from the practice of which, from some cause or another, she had recently desisted. When the good man entered, James received him with more than ordinary courtesy, and his wife's face brightened up as the earth smiles in the sunshine after a shower.

Serenity and happiness were mirrored in the features of the man of God. His breast was not disquieted by the phantoms of ambition, he had no feverish dreams after gold, no base motives to inwardly disturb repose, no jealousies to torture his bosom. On the plain and humble path of virtue he plodded with step unseen, sighing for no distinctions, panting for no honours, happy in the comforting possession of a consoling conscience. Well would it be for you James to take a lesson from such a harmless life, and if you chose to copy it, your future would be more blest.

Time wore on. Inglis's visits to the metropolis were as repeated and protracted as ever, and his tastes for city life grew by what they had long fed upon. The Count Puffendoff and he, at no distant period, were on terms of peculiar intimacy, and that distinguished individual very obligingly introduced Jemmy to Lord Squanderfield, and two other bosom companions. To be much east of Temple Bar was now in Inglis' mind foolish, and the chief of his business concerns were transacted through agents with whom he corresponded, more than personally conferred. No handsomer cabriolet, with better steed and more fantastically dressed tiger, rolled over the pavements of Pall-Mall or St. James's, and his turn-out was fit for a marquis. Those who knew him, looked up to him as a man of spirit and fashion, and on one particular occasion when Sir Harry Dashover was in town, Jemmy's vehicle was pointed out as being one of the most *distingué* in the metropolis. To have seen him at his club in his gladsome moments, he appeared more like a spirit roving

over the fields of Elysium, than a mere creature of humanity, dwelling amidst the fog, and smoke, and clatter, and excitement of London. The society, the scenes, the things by which he was surrounded, constituted an element fitted to his peculiar mental organization, and in such he respired freely and joyously. No quietly subdued repinings for Letitia—no regretfulness at being absent from his home, could be traced in his features, and his general wont now was to be heedless, reckless, merry! He lent a “willing hand to his cap” and lived like one, who, conscious that the enjoyments of life are at best but short-lived pleasures, and determined to make as much of them as laid in his power.

Time wore on—and a greater change had come over the spirit of his dream. When he now repaired to Elleringay, his deportment was often strange and inconsistent. At one time he would be full of frolicsome fun, at another, sad and despondent. His eagerness to converse on business matters had considerably abated. Gideon knew not what to think, but he was so locked up in

the abilities and qualifications of "their James," that his fears and hopes rose and fell with the barometrical changes of his now volatile, now serious son-in-law. Inglis from time to time mentioned some precise sum in pounds, shillings, pence, and farthings, which had been placed to their conjoint credit at their bankers, and such facts were the main considerations with the avaricious Gideon. Not unfrequently might some particular friend of James' be seen accompanying him from the Cross-Road's Inn to the Hall, there to partake of Ellerin-gay hospitality, and as Gideon now in the gratification of his own vanity, took delight in inviting his old clients, such individuals as the man-mountain, that wight, as Shakspeare says, of "fat paunch and lean pate," and persons of like class met at their table, so that what with visitors, and what with business matters, the days passed less tardily with those gentlemen, than when they first came to reside at their seat. It was pleasing to hear the man-mountain, and other of Gideon's old clients praise their aristocratic mansion, and flattering to James

that each and all of his London visitors who from time to time favoured him with their company, that they departed full of admiration, and not a little astounded with so aristocratic a residence.

Letitia saw things through a different medium. Though endowed with no exalted faculties of perception, she beheld with uneasiness, the feverish excitement and altered character of her husband. She had remonstrated, she had besought, she had wept at those London visits, she had essayed by every means in her power to terminate them—but in vain. Her father, whenever she hinted at the question, silenced her objections, and at length, like many wives brow-beaten into dumb repinings, she was coerced into the semblance of resignation, and compelled to hold communion with her hidden sentiments and stifled apprehensions. She saw that his laughter was often the forced hilarity made to deceptively float over the latent depths of care, and not unfrequently she could read in his uneasy features, the disturbing pangs which of late she was con-

vinced had rankled in his bosom. But there were opposites in his demeanour inexplicable, as he would at another time appear happy without the trace of a turbulent reflection.

"My love," said he one day to his wife, "on my return from town, the Count de Puffendoff accompanies me, to honour us with his presence for a week. I hope, my dear, you will give orders that the entertainment shall be worthy of Elleringay, and suited to so distinguished a guest."

"I will make the best arrangements in my power, James," replied Letitia unconcernedly.

"I know you will, 'Tishy—I know you will," affectionately returned her partner.

"That may be one's duty which is not one's will."

"How am I to interpret your meaning?—why speak you thus? Is it not to your approval that I ask so dignified a personage as the Count to our house? He is an individual of whose acquaintance both you and myself ought to feel proud—more, 'tis in his power to befriend me much."

"As your wife, I will receive your friends with cordiality, but, James, as your wife, I had rather see you at home happy and contented, than in thus continually having visitors."

"You talk nonsense, my dear girl, you talk nonsense. When I return to Ellerinegay, I require some little change—some social companionship, after the distraction and harass of business and its anxieties."

"The comfort and serenity of domestic peace ought to be preferable."

"Come—come, you are inclined to be pettish with me to-day. Good morning, Tishy, good morning. I trust when I return, you will be in better humour."

Inglis felt some difficulty in restraining his temper, and with something of an inward pleasure placed his foot in the carriage now waiting to convey him to the Cross Roads' Inn. There was an inly reminding monitor which reproved him for his neglect, and told him that he was not acting according to the declarations he had made. But alas! he had got into the vortex, and he now

must float or sink with the tide on which he had chanced his destiny ; he felt as if his fate hung poised between the blue ethereal of happiness above, and the misery and mischance of a Tartarus below !

CHAPTER XII.

"In person tall, a figure form'd to please,
 If symmetry could charm deprived of ease;
 When motionless he stands, we all approve—
 What pity 'tis the thing was made to move.

• • • • • •

Big with pride,
 Assumes the pompous port, the martial stride."

CHURCHILL.

"Quit thy state—
 All equal are, within the Church's gate."

HERBERT'S TEMPLE.

WITH a woman's penetration, Mrs. Inglis fully noticed the inattention of her husband, and it is not to be wondered at, that the natural susceptibilities of her sex were stung by the increasing coldness of neglect. She might, as she had done, remonstrate, but

when his heart—the affections of her affianced—were at fault, remonstrance was, at the best, but an idle alternative. From a thousand trivial observances, she had of late come to the hidden, but torturing conviction, that her haunting surmises were not founded on imaginary circumstances. Melancholy avowal, which the inward thoughts might make; but, when fact after fact obtruded itself, to confirm each unwelcome fear, how difficult was it to dispel the agonizing reflections—aye, agonizing! for thus to be deceived, and have the darling idol of the heart's long worshipping pulled down and destroyed, was indeed a sorrow—a desolation worse than any other calamity that could befall.

A woman's love is the sun which warms and cherishes the system of her existence; and, when darkened by the clouds of doubt, such is to eclipse her happiness, and hurl her soul into veriest night.

When she began to suspect, and, by piecemeal, lose the esteem which she had before entertained, every hope—every motive of

ambition, and all that previously gave pleasure, were now renounced, and had lost the power to delight. She viewed the future through a different medium; and the subduing influence of a gradually increasing despondency stole over her soul, like the thick vapour which at even obscures the late sunny spots that had enlivened the landscape, and which ushers in the dulness and darkness of nocturnal gloom.

There is a reprehensiveness—a moral guilt, in him who is so abandoned and flinty-breasted as to win a mortal heart, and then cast it from him, as a thing to become possessed of and thrown aside in heedlessness and apathy, well nigh equalling the worst of crimes. Though for such a moral delinquent there is no tribunal at which he can be arraigned—no punishment which can at human will be wrecked upon his sinful head, yet the voice of conscience in the lonely hour whispers in appalling accents, that a retribution shall come; and that unerring justice, which follows hard on the actions of humanity, sooner or later is avenged.

If Squire Clynciere had been foolish enough to communicate his thoughts, he would have acknowledged how proud he was that their James was making his way into the circles of the aristocracy. It was obvious, from unguarded expressions which he from time to time let fall, that he fully appreciated the honour of the Count de Puffendoff's promised visit, and that the acquaintance with such personages did not run counter with his prejudices. He gave explicit orders that an entertainment should be provided for that distinguished guest, in a manner suitable to the dignity and worthy of the hospitalities dispensed at Elleringay Manor. On the appointed day, the yellow chariot was dispatched to the Cross Roads' Inn, for the homeward conveyance of James and the Count; and sundry little preparations had scrupulously been observed, in order to add to the importance of their country seat. On that day he paid more than wonted attention to his toilette, spoke in very contemptuous terms of bucolic squires, made some unimportant alterations in the

drawin'-room, and gave to his daughter certain significant hints to second his resolutions in the determination that the family should hold up their heads.

The downward journey of James and the Count was full of good fellowship and fun. They smoked cigars, told boisterous tales, and struck a sort of respectful obedience into the minds of the astonished wayfarers who were their companions in travel. Arriving at the De Bohun Arms, there stood the yellow chariot in readiness for its exalted freight—into it they nimbly stepped, and in a few moments the dashing vehicle was aristocratically rolling along towards the Hall.

"By a—Jove, Inglis, this is a splendid avenue—they are indeed noble trees!" observed the Count admiringly, as they proceeded through the park, and wound their way past towering elms and gigantic oaks, which there had flourished for centuries.

As if utterly unaffected by the Count's complimentary remark, James gave a nod, and carelessly enunciated an affirmative.

As the chariot neared that Tudor pile, Puffendoff's eye became rivetted on a mansion so hoary and historic in its aspect, that he again and again gave utterance to his admiration of Inglis's home.

"It is only in Britain that you see such glorious houses as this," said Puffendoff, "where comfort and nobleness are so happily blended. What tales could these old walls unfold, were they possessed of the powers of articulation! Yes, in days of yore many a stirring scene has taken place beneath this roof. It is amusing to conjure up to one's imagination coquettish maidens in quaint bodices, waggish youths with brodered doublets and laced ruffles, patriarchal gentlemen, comfortable old dames, a legend of retainers, and so forth. Glorious days they were! I remember, when on my tour through Northern Europe, that I visited a—"

The wheels ceased to revolve, and a gaily-dressed footman obsequiously emerged from the huge stone portico, opened the carriage door, clattered down the steps, and abruptly curtailed the Count's conversation.

James and his august friend proceeded towards the drawing-room, and on reaching that apartment, Mrs. Inglis was busily employed at some species of fancy work, and her father mentally lost in the pages of that silent and antiquated friend, the *Clavis Mystica*; indeed, he appeared to be in such earnest, and so gratified with his book, that an observer might, with some degree of inferential reasoning, have supposed that he remembered the words of the scholastic Erasmus, who somewhere says: "*Sic oportet ad librum, presertim miscellanei generis, legendum accedere lectorem, ut solet, ad convivium conviva civilis.*" It is a matter of considerable doubt, however, whether the dry chapters of the *Clavis Mystica* were or were not savoury aliments for his intellectual feeding. It might be, certainly, that he was by such abstracted attention acting up to the Baconian aphorism, that some books are to be digested; but it is more than probable that this pondering over rusty volumes at the precise period when Puffendoff was expected, was rather to impress the Count with his great learning and catholic mind.

Inglis, with an evident glow of pride, introduced his titled friend, first to his wife and then to Gideon. Letitia received the moustached noble with something of that diffidence which the consciousness of inferiority induces; but her father, who was more versed in human nature, and who had, as James would have said, lived more in the great common world, maintained a more dignified and easier bearing.

"You are indeed right welcome to Elleringay Manor, Count Puffendoff; and I hope, in thus kindly honouring our quiet circle, you will at once make yourself at home."

"A—thank you, thank you, Squire; from all a—reports of the hospitality of Elleringay, I a—shall not starve," replied Puffendoff, more than commonly elongating his syllables, and drawing himself up into a majestic attitude.

"I hope the Count's portmanteau has been taken into the best bed-room, James," observed Letitia, with some anxiety awakened by her wonted thoughtfulness relative to domestic matters.

"My valet will see to that, my dear," replied James, emphatically pronouncing that servant's specific function.

The conversation for a time was formally kept up; the Elleringaytonians ever and anon throwing out some chance remark relative to their swelling greatness, and the elegant Puffendoff, in the most matter-of-course way possible, mentioning my Lord this, or the Marquis of that. Even to a stranger's ear, this straining at exalted things—this reference to great personages, would have been so glaring as to shine through the thin gauze of pretentious affectation.

It would be no more than justice to Letitia to say, that the dinner was a thoroughly abundant and substantial meal. There were no dishes of *pâté de fois gras*, Frenchified messes, nor oleaginous compounds, of which Puffendoff would talk, to evince his acquaintance with continental edibles; but it was the wholesome, bountiful, good fare of un-Gallitized, un-Italianized, common-sense English folk; and however the Count might knowingly expatiate on the daintiness of frogs'

legs, and such trash, it was unequivocally manifest, ere he had thrust from him his last plate, that he had made a hearty repast.

In despite of all Inglis could do, the chosen of his bosom would, in something of triumphant consciousness, dwell upon the *cuisine*—would inform the Count of her personally presiding over the pickling and preserving, and so forth. Gideon gave one or two significant nods to his daughter, by way of intimation that trite discussions on culinary matters were beneath the dignity of her present position; and more than once her husband bit his lip, and gave so pointedly an interrupting turn to the conversation, as not only to confer a broad and unmistakeable hint to his wife, but which plainly told all present that his wife's topics were at least to himself unwelcome.

The Count's faculties were not dormant; he knew something of the nature and idiosyncrasy of the female mind, and he shaped his attentions accordingly. Nothing could exceed his politeness to Letitia; to her he was a patient listener, to her he addressed

his puns and witticisms, laughed at her jokes, and at length he felt he had in no slight degree ingratiated himself. The father and husband were pleased at this complimentary demonstration in a person of the Count's rank ; the former was more than ever convinced how few fathers had such a daughter, the latter was inclined to believe that his chosen really possessed more attractions than he himself had ever given her credit for.

But the Count possessed all the requisites for winning the hearts of the fair ; he was handsome, accomplished, and witty, his conversation was full of, and never flagging, with little nothings, he knew how indirectly to flatter ; and having gone through the various phases of what is conventionally termed gay life, he was now no novice in playing such a part as he had at the present assumed. His acuteness of observation at once convinced him, that Letitia was not a person of any great depth of intellect ; and he found out that to fan her vanity, was to beget from her golden opinions. His long success as a

gay Lothario, had generated in him an amount of presumptive confidence, which he scrupled not to unblushingly exercise whenever inclination prompted.

Such diversions as rural retirement could afford, were by James and his friend rendered available. Thy rode out in the morning—fished one day—shot another—visited all objects of interest in the neighbourhood, worthy of inspection, and nothing was forgotten that could yield interest or amusement. Squire Clynciere's acquaintance in the neighbourhood was limited, yet, as ever happens all are not full of splenetic prejudice, and there are ever a few who will scrape up an intimacy from motives of interest, or like considerations. Of the most eligible whom Gideon knew he invited, and the glorious dinners—the choice wines—and hearty welcome which the Count met with, made up for the lack of other deficiencies. Whilst bagatelle, conversation, and coffee, filled up the first few hours of the evening, and according to Puffendoff's notions, grilled bones, cigars, and decanters at twelve made

an agreeable finale. His urbanity and condescension—his liveliness and good humour, were such as to render him in Gideon's opinion, one of the most desirable and jovial companions he had ever had the honour of knowing. Indeed Clynochiere, in the course of time began to entertain the very strange idea, that people of title might actually in their feelings and fancies, be like unto other people, and that the blazon of heraldic distinctions might possibly be possessed without any very peculiar impression being made in the inherent nature of the man, and that even lords and ladies might in their essentials be but ordinary humanity !

The fact of a magnate sojourning at the Hall, was within the short space of twenty-four hours known beneath every roof in Elleringay. That remote community by some kind of sympathetic influence, was simultaneously aware of all concerns which transpired within its retired precincts, and if any occurrence of uncommon character did take place, it went from house to house, with marvellous celerity. The simple rustics had

Harry beheld so aristocratic looking a person as the Count, when he called to mind, that on last being in London, Inglis' cabriolet had been pointed out to him as the very pattern card of fashion, belonging to one of the most dashing clubites in town—that there was no moral doubt of the new comers being inordinately rich—that a man must be of some degree of respectability, to be balloted as a member of one of the clubs in Pall Mall—that James's friendliness with the Count was a voucher for his metropolitan connections—with like contemplations, Sir Harry was not only inclined to relent at having taken up an unfounded prejudice, but the better man within him spoke that in this want of courtesy he had wronged a neighbour of neighbourly respect. It is true that Sir Harry might have suffered from the cupidity and the tremendous bills of costs, preferred by gentlemen of the legal profession—it is true, that he had good reason to do nothing short of hate those by whom he had been so victimized, but Gideon had had no concern in such transactions, and

Gideon was but an unit entering into the totality of the legal legion.

As regarded the rector, that man of spiritual vocation was, in his jocose and good-natured moments, when spinning long fox-hunting yarns, as ensconced in the sleek hide of his frequently-referred-to favourite, poor old Shiver-the-Timbers, candid enough to confess that he regretted not having done the neighbourly towards the fresh possessors of the Hall, and as he well reasoned, none could deny that Godfrey had brought the calamities under which he smarted upon himself; and if the Clynchieres had not bought the estate, why some other person would, who might have been less eligible still. And then the spinster sisters—to tell the truth, when they were informed of the hospitalities of the Manor House under the new *regime*, and were aware how generously hot negus and so forth were dispensed, they, too, were mortified in having been warped into the conduct they had observed; merely, forsooth, to please the prejudices of the rector, who had seldom asked them more than once a year, and

only on those juvenile occasions when the De Bohun children were regaled with strawberries and cream ! And then Shears, whose sentiments were an echo of a certain section of that little community, he, like his superiors, was now fast coming to the conviction, that it would have been as well if he had said less at the Plough, touching the young Squire's ducking in the horse-pond, and shooting the "cheeper," as it was very evident that the new family were somebodies after all—that Mr. Inglis if he were a nobody, would not have a Count (who was the same as a Lord) to come and visit him, and Shears began to think that the day might come when Mr. Inglis could, if he would, get Shears junior, a berth in London—and in such reasonings Shears senior censured himself that he had not observed the same bearing as the more politic Fallow, and the more cautious schoolmaster.

When the rector had ceased to sermonize—when his discourse had terminated, which, unfortunately, rather tended to excite fear than confer the consolations of hope—when

he had desisted from drawing those dreadful portraitures of lakes of fire, burning tongues, gnashing of teeth, and everlasting despair—when he had finished the frequent allusions with which his exhortation was interspersed, relative to Lazarus and Dives, as well as the repeatedly emphatic declaration, that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven—when the unsophisticated listeners had repassed the hoary portal, and, on leaving the sacred edifice forgot all sacred things, in the worldly discussions of crops and kine, as they retraced their steps to their humble homes—and when they sat down to their frugal meals, Lord Puff-'em-off, as they called him, became the chief topic beneath some threescore roofs. The opinion ran, unanimously, that in London he was a great man, and, doubtless, was on intimate terms with the king! Some of the cherry-cheeked maidens, whose earthly peregrinations could have been circumscribed by a range of some ten miles, declared they had never seen such a handsome man; and the Tony Lump-

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kins and Johnny Clodpoles, had looked in utter amazement on such a fine made, finger-ringed, dandyfied specimen of humanity! That his hirsute lip denoted his warrior calling all were agreed, and could Puffendoff have heard the multifarious speculations made respecting his important self, he would verily have come to the conclusion that people ought to go from home to be appreciated.

After the service the family took a walk through a portion of their territorial possessions. The sun shone bright and beautifully, and a Sabbath stillness made even the wide quietude of the country more distinctly perceptible. The extended landscape, which on every side lay outstretched in diversified richness as far as the eye could reach, might now be gazed upon in its loveliest aspect. The woods, the fields, the myriad of wild flowers, the mellowed music of the feathered choir, the healthy freshness of the air—in fine, the calm glory of nature everywhere exemplified, was such as to make even the unreflecting mind of Puffendoff more medita-

tive than its wont. Ever and anon he stood, and with folded arms, surveyed the enchanting panorama presented to the sight, and he seemed to agree with poor Keates that "things of beauty are a joy for ever !"

There is a whispering voice even in the placid calm of Nature's face which sheds a contemplative feeling over the soul—even over one so giddy and unstable as his own—which could give a tincturing of seriousness in a heart where so little of virtue found place, and where so much of worldliness and sullyng desires had so long been nurtured. The intoxicating influence of city life—the gay and volatile pleasures of dissipated haunts—thoughtless companions—and profligate scenes, had done much to root out every laudable feeling; but they had left him not all evil, and however he assumed an almost unvarying heedlessness and unflagging levity before others, he was not insensible to beauty—not unaffected by those solemn emotions which an earth, so full of loveliness, grandeur, and mysterious combinations, must ever inspire—and which chill

man into the humiliating conviction of his own shadowy meagreness—his own utter insignificance, and which tell him—fearfully, eloquently, eternally, tell him there is a God!

CHAPTER XIII.

"She, too, in her mind
Those recollections cherished, and such thoughts
As though no hope allayed their bitterness."

SOUTHEY.

ON regaining the mansion, Inglis was in no slight degree surprised when informed of an arrival in the bulky personage of no other individual than Abel Greenham, of dry-salt-ing notoriety ! James was truly at a non-plus ; and the question instantly suggested itself as to the manner in which they could in a summary yet polite way, get rid of the vulgar citizen. Gideon, in the fulness of his heart, had given him a general invitation ; and the pent-up, smoke-breathing

Londoner, being desirous of an *outing*, as he termed it, called to mind his quondam friend Clynciere, and without more ado, he chartered himself by the stage-coach, which thrice every week started from the Saracen's Head, to wend its way through the county of — ; and, like unto all other persons and things coming southwards, and destined for Elleringay, he was in due course of time deposited at the Cross Roads' Inn. The day was unusually fine, and, as Abel had taken this journey for the especial benefit of his health, he determined to engulf as much fresh air, and take as much exercise, as the brief period of his rural sojourn would admit; consequently, after having blunted his appetite with bread and cheese, and having washed the same down with a copious potation of home-brewed, he seized his carpet-bag, and joyously trotted off towards the village.

It was indeed an unfortunate coincidence, thought Inglis, that the fat burgher had made a descent upon them precisely at a time when all such of their former acquaintance

could not better oblige them than by their absence; as it was very unpleasant to have to introduce such individuals to so distinguished a personage as the Count de Puffendoff.

"Hang it, Tishy," exclaimed James, aside to his wife, "that old Greenham has actually come from town to honour us with his elegant presence. It was indeed exceedingly foolish on the part of your father, not to stipulate a time for his visit. Precisely in that spirit of contradiction in which the fates so frequently order things, he has just come when we didn't want him."

"Good gracious, James, you don't say so?"

"I do, though."

"And I suppose that is his carpet-bag?"

"Yes! and as greasy as if it had on divers occasions been employed as the packing-case for his vaunted Westphalian hams!" replied Inglis, at the same time casting a scornful glance upon the baggage of the man-mountain, which had not yet been removed from the hall.

"I'll call papa, and know what he thinks, in this dreadful dilemma."

"No—no, never mind, Tishy—never mind. It shall not be said that we have infringed the rights of hospitality. Leave the matter to me. I have seen something of the world, and I'll manage it with the Count."

"Just as you please, dearest," returned Mrs. Inglis, very passively and very good-naturedly, and as if she had the most consummate opinion of the clever capabilities of her James.

"Ah, my good friend Greenham, you've come at last. Well, we are I am sure delighted to see you at Elleringay! Allow me, Mr. Greenham, to introduce you to my very excellent friend, the Count de Puffendoff," said Inglis, cheerfully and chirpingly, as a cricket on the hearth, as soon as he had opened the drawing-room door, where he found the Count and the burly citizen conversing on the state of the weather and like general topics.

The Count elegantly rose from his chair, and somewhat condescendingly bowed to

Abel. The latter gave a kind of tumultuous shuffle in his seat, and in the best manner he could, ducked a respectful nod.

In a few moments Gideon also entered, and, with a good-natured smile, reiterated his sincere delight at thus beholding his old client. Ere long Greenham and Gideon merged into conversation which more particularly referred to themselves, when Inglis and Puffendoff slowly paced towards the recess in the great bay window at the end of the room, when the following dialogue, in an under-tone, ensued.

"And a—pray, Inglis, who a—is that great lump of a man—that colossal heap of mortality?"

"Oh! he is a person of great notoriety, who has——"

"A great person, physically speaking," interrupted the Count, and eying the man-mountain with a smile.

"He's one of our modern merchant princes."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Puffendoff, quizzically dilating the white of his eye, "and to

cite from the sacred pages from which you have quoted, he is one of the great men of the earth."

"That very individual could, if he desired, draw a cheque of such amount as would astonish you, and Lombard Street would cash it without an if. One of these fine mornings, sure as my name's Jemmy, e 'll wake and find himself the civic king!"

"Civic kings, as you term them, are fashioned out of very common materials though in these times, are they not?"

"The mayoralty is certainly not so honourable as it was in the days of Whittington."

"What an aldermanic paunch!" laughingly observed the censorious Count. "'Pon my honour, *mon cher*, I know little relative to men and matters east of Temple Bar," resumed Puffendoff after a brief pause. "I don't pass that fortunate barrier between us and the horrid city once in twelvemonths, yet, I a—must say that in Continental Europe, London merchants are deemed men of stability and probity. But my dear Inglis, you and I know very little touching such persons and such concerns."

James nodded, and enunciated an affirmative, while his conscience told him otherwise ; but it was meet in him now, at least so he deemed, to have little knowledge of that horrid city.

“Many of our nobles though,” observed James after a few moments silence, “have married with merchants’ daughters.”

“Certainly, and thus did the heiresses of Genoa and Amsterdam become united to aristocratic husbands. Though I abominate the words commerce, merchandize, business, and such common-place epithets, yet I should have no very great prejudices against marrying from this class, only there were the paramount considerations in the way of acres and consols. My house originally derived its wealth and honours from the sword, and of course it is an excusable vanity in one of my order to have my peculiarly bent inclinations towards military distinctions.”

“Certainly, certainly, Puffendoff, a very pardonable predilection, and you are right in the opinion that all true nobility is founded by the brave.”

"But I hope I shall see something more of this particular type of humanity, *mon cher*,—this merchant prince. Do ask him to stay a day or two—he would be quite an example of a class in the study of human nature. I would contemplate him as the prototype of the British mercantile biped, and I'll be bound from his good-natured, jolly face, that he will afford us some amusement. It might be a rainy day to-morrow, and if so, what a desideratum he would prove."

"I'll manage it," said Inglis, delighted at this odd taste, expressed by the Count, "you shall have a fresh subject for study. I believe that philosophic heathen, Plato, says in his Politics that it is difficult to make good ideas intelligible without the aid of example, and by a parity of reasoning great and fresh subjects must, with more facility, be comprehended by means of illustration."

"You are now wading beyond my depth in referring to Grecian philosophies, but do ask him to tarry awhile."

"Mr. Greenham," spoke he, addressing himself to the rotund Abel, "I hope you

will favour us with your presence at least for some days."

"The fact of my carpet bag having accompanied me, James, is a sort of exponent of my intentions to quarter myself upon your hospitality for a time. 'Tis a kind of outward visible sign, James, of my inward and spiritual feeling respecting that point," laughingly replied Abel, and with a knowing nod accompanying this delivery, as if he had uttered a piece of wit worthy of Rabelais or Fielding.

"Of course Mr. Greenham will remain with us as long as he possibly can—of course he will," observed Clynciere.

To tell the truth, Inglis did not greatly relish thus being familiarly called *James*. He would not have cared one fig had not the Count been present, but he had no desire that Puffendoff should for one moment suppose he had ever been on easy terms with a person like Abel. Again the thought came into Inglis's mind that in the event of Abel quaffing his cup too deeply, he might, perchance, become unpleasantly communica-

tive. "Confound the fellow," said James mutteringly, "I would have given more than a trifle, had he remained amongst his Westphalians and Wiltshire flitches, instead of coming down to bore us with his cumbersome carcass here!"

At dinner Mr. Abel Greenham, in a very demonstrative manner, evinced his entire approval of the *cuisine*. He was, generally, taciturn during these eventful moments in his existence, and he then became a practical illustration of the wisdom of fully attending to one concern at once. Puffendoff's eye cast many furtive glances at the quiet, yet expeditious, manner in which the citizen disposed of sundry plate-fulls of substantial viands. The Count again and again essayed to provoke conversation from the man-mountain, but no; his curt and laconic replies evinced his preference to defer discourse till desert. Letitia's table was a very creditable one; the glass, the plate, the linen, were bright and beautifully clean. When it had been decided that they should come to Elleringay, she effected divers

purchases in town, in order that their house might be replete with those genteel appurtenances which are indispensables in an establishment like unto that over which she presided. Amongst the new things she had procured were some elegantly cut finger-glasses, and to say the truth when the clear water of Elleringay was in them, it appeared sparkling as crystal, and most inviting to the thirsty soul as well as for the genteel emersion of the digits. Abel Greenham had been used to no such table appendages, and forthwith employed his as a drinking-cup! James coloured—Gideon stared—Letitia dropped her knife and fork, and the Count, no longer enabled to restrain himself, burst out into a sudden and uncontrollable fit of laughter. But the meal passed over, and the merchant prince had appeased his appetite; he for a time subsided into a very comfortable calm, and was as speechless as a Red Indian.

Grilled bones and decanters at an advanced hour have on many an occasion, and with many individuals, as well as during the

evening and with the persons in question, had the effect of eliciting peculiar and otherwise dormant characteristics. When the man-mountain's digestion had favourably proceeded, and when he became stimulated with the strong waters, he would become very conversable—tell prolix anecdotes—and glory in reverting to past times.

“What I am going to relate to you, James, occurred when your worthy father-in-law drew up a legal agreement for these four thousand —”

“Now, my dear Greenham, this will never do—now if you please, sir,” interrupted James, who well knew what was coming relative to four thousand Westphalians, and endeavouring to give a turn to, or make him forget, this interesting piece of conversation.

“What have I done?—I'll appeal to the Count Puffan'cough.”

“Sir!” replied the Count, as with humorous visage he looked towards the citizen, “my name is most assuredly not *Puffan'cough*, and if you will have the kind-

ness to just awaken your historic recollections, and call to mind those glorious heroes who fought so valiantly for the cause of Christendom under Sobieski at Lepanto, you may then perchance recount the patronymic of that valiant Polish knight Puffendoff, and as I am his lineal representative, I bear the honour of his name, Mr. Greenhorn !”

“I ask your pardon, Count—it was, using the expression of my learned and old friend here”—turning towards Clynciere—“it was a—a—lapsing lingo,” concluded Abel, for a moment calling the rare words to memory, and subsequently imagining he had made a classical quotation.

“*Lapsus linguæ—lapsus linguæ*, Abel,” quickly replied Gideon in the correction of the man-mountain’s mutilated latinity.

The Count bit his lip to restrain his laughter. Gideon on being addressed as learned sat more perpendicularly in his chair, and Inglis’ features mirrored up the commingled expression of amusement and annoyance.

“But a—my good friend, Mr. Greenham,

a kind of accusation was preferred against you by Inglis, and we must know in what such consisted."

"Yes!—yes—Count—I had almost forgotten that; now, James, what was it?" asked Abel, whose powers of perception were manifestly becoming deteriorated by the generous imbibing in which for some hours he had more or less indulged.

"My accusation was, Mr. Greenham, that you in repetition poured hot water and put sugar into your goblet, without the very necessary, and very qualifying adjunct, which in readiness stands before you."

"No—no, James—no—no, I'm not a-going to obscure my reasoning faculties to-night," returned Abel with a grave shake of the head, and essaying to demonstrate his fixed determination to obey the virtue of sobriety.

Thus did this evening like others pass over, and this was what the quartette deemed social enjoyment! Whenever Abel was about to be unpleasantly communicative, Inglis very adroitly interrupted him;—the Count gave a sketch of his travels in Northern

Europe—Gideon ever and anon made some boastful allusion, and the versatile and redoubtable Jemmy Jingles pertinaciously chattered on every subject conversed upon.

The Count's visit as first proposed was to extend over a week, but he felt so very comfortable, and the family were so honoured by his presence that he protracted it to three,

Time wore on. Inglis continued his metropolitan visits periodically as before; but their duration became more and more protracted. After a while, it was unquestionable that living at Elleringay was a tiresome task. He now never appeared at his ease when at home, and his half-distracted wife was, if possible, more fully and sensitively aware than ever of her unfortunate lot. Her father, however, took the part of his son-in-law, and strangely enough continued with a perverse infatuation to be blind to his follies. Though the smoke of a volcano had begun to issue forth, and though Letitia beheld this, in all the certainty of a moral conviction, yet Clynciere would not see it, or if he did, he rather considered it as the harmless mist

which briefly obscures the mountain top, and which would be brushed away by the certain and succeeding sun of good fortune. During those intervals when Inglis was free from the stimulating effects of the bowl, a sullen, settled gloom appeared to overshadow him. He now rose late, ate little, and during the earlier part of the day, at the least cause of excitation, felt nervous and agitated. There was nothing in which he took delight; and he spoke to, and of all around him, in a tone of embitterment and misanthropic railing, which formed too true an indication of that unhappy and disquieted condition of mind, into which his inward and spiritual being had by piecemeal fallen. He had no valid reason for complaint at home—his hearth was comfortable, nay, luxurious. Gideon had placed in him unbounded confidence, and Letitia studiously ordered everything with a reference to his peace and enjoyment. But, alas! it was in that great and outer world, respecting a thorough acquaintance with which, in his overweening vanity he vaunted, where lay the secret cause of his cares,

where arose those hidden but icy streams of misery, that chillingly ran through his bosom. Yes, there he had imbibed the poison which circulated in his veins—it was amid the rocks and shoals of city life, whither, in untoward influence, an evil star had lured him.

Unhappy man ; why not at once sum up within you sufficient of determined, virile character, of self-governing, self-resolute will, to turn from those flowery but seductive paths, to follow the course of which, to a moral certainty, must, sooner or later, effect your entire discomfiture—your lasting overthrow ? While it is not too late, wrench fully, fairly from you those manacles of vice by which you are fettered. Free yourself from the slavery of dominating passions—yea, Inglis, and show to your now deluded self, that you will no longer be the dupe of miscreant others, nor yet your own foe ; that you will reform while reformation can be of avail ; that you can flee from danger, though so rapidly nearing the dizzy brink of destruction. But it hath been, and so it will be

with many as well as yourself, that the indulgence in follies long continued binds the victim faster and faster to his besetting sin; until, having at length wellnigh lost the power of free agency, he falls a sacrifice to an evil at first possessing the slightest influence, but which, when long pursued, acquires a multiple power of fascination from which it is impossible to escape.

"What makes you so waspish with me, James?" said Letitia one day, after her husband had returned from town, and on the most trivial occurrences vented his spleen. "If there be anything which does not please you, tell me, and if in my power, it shall be rectified. No wife could be more solicitous for her husband's happiness; but thus to hear your taunts and bear your angry frowns without cause, without provocation, is an injustice, a cruelty, which is indeed hard to endure."

"Madam, I am in no mood to be thus catechised. I'll not be browbeaten by a—"

"You never were by me. I feel this wasting grief, which so long hath festered in my heart, will not be of protracted duration,

and for such unkindness a day of contrition, through the justice of Providence, inevitably will come," interrupted Letitia, with an energy, and in an impassioned manner foreign to her meek and retiring disposition.

Inglis knit his brows; a consuming fire raged within him. First silently pacing to and fro, then suddenly screwing upon his heel, he left the room, not to cool his temper, but, like many ignoble-minded men, who behave brutally, and then wish to pass the annoyance into forgetfulness, he sought relief in those lethean draughts in which now lay his greatest consolation.

When in London he rarely passed east of Temple Bar—rarely bent his steps towards those business haunts, where once he spent the major part of his time; when he did, however, he never forgot to look in upon Abel; and perhaps it is not too much in this part of our narrative to say, that these visits paid to the man-mountain were not certainly without reference to matters of more consideration than the mere dues of friendship. Capel Court, the 'Change, and the various

rookeries of commerce up dark passages and down narrow lanes, were now to his aristocratized feelings, more repugnant than ever, and he had resolved to seek his fortunes not only in an easier manner, but amongst a different and more polished set.

As the reader may easily imagine, a person of Inglis's aspirations and particular cast of mind, could not fail to be influenced by the fashions and foibles of those with whom he associated; and how could such an one escape the corruptions on every side? The gay—the volatile—the reckless—the dissipated—the gentlemanly—the genteel, were loiterers around the fresh paths he had chosen, and it would verily have required a stouter mind than his to pass unscathed by their machinations. He knew not that over the fashionable world, so called, there were elegant harpies and vulture exquisites ever hovering to pounce upon the unwary as their prey; and he reflected not that if he once got in the toils of such designing men, his ruin was inevitable. He had got into the vortex—cards, billiards, and dice had consumed, to

his immense loss of substance and peace, many an evening which ought to have been devoted to his home and his wife. He had now stored up for himself a chastisement, from which there was no probable means of escape. Well might that brow grow sullen, and those gestures indicate despair—he had trusted his frail bark on the stream till it had got within the hurrying influence of the rapids. The precipice was coming nearer—nearer—what could save him?

CHAPTER XIV.

"Keep a gamester from the dice."

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

Act III., Scene III.

"To his cost,

For want of skill he always lost.

———There was a *Club* of cheats

Who had contrived a thousand feats ;

Could change the stock, or *cog* a dye,

And thus deceive the sharpest eye.

No wonder how his fortune sunk,

His brothers fleece him when he's drunk."

DEAN SWIFT.

A STORMY, rainy, murky night in London, has the effect of thinning the great thoroughfares in the same ratio as less frequented places ; and even the metropolis of the world, under our cloudy, humid, changeable sky, is

at times as dirty and drizzly, and dull and miserable, as to make one grumble and feel peevish and dispirited here as well as in less favoured places. Well, the night now referred to was one of those blowy, rainy, wintry nights, when carriages of all shapes, characters, and contrivances, were in various degrees of progression, threading in wonderfully near proximity past one another, in all directions. Every respectable person crouched him or herself, into the smallest possible dimensions under a dripping umbrella. The non-respectable, who were not supplied with those thoroughly common-sense articles, appeared to envy the possessors of them. The wind ever and anon in angry soughs swept past in melancholy tone—doors clashed, and the heavy drops pattered and pelted against the windows, while splashing, and water, and mud, were on every side prominently recurring realities. The poor jaded horses urged along in the various vehicles, as seen by the dim light emitted by the street lamps and the rows of shops, to a fantastic fancy appeared varnished; and it was manifest that

their gubernators had, in acting on the defensive, donned every article conveniently available, in the shape of huge capes, oil coverings, and wrap-rascals.

As the night wore away, the great arterial thoroughfares, as well as the bye streets and alleys, at an unusually early hour, looked dull and forsaken, and, by midnight, the busy multitudes had apparently with one consent sought their dormitories. St. Martin's church had just chimed twelve, when a solitary hackney coach rumbled past towards Piccadilly, and ever and anon the hearty and unrestrained laugh of its inmates could be heard, as the sound of the wheels died away in the distance. Onwards it progressed, the laugh at intervals being audible, till it suddenly drew up before one of those gorgeous piles in the neighbourhood of St. James's.

"Oh! give the poor devil a crown—don't be scurvy—he deserves it, I'm sure. From Drury Lane to this is worse, by Jove, than three miles' drive in the day time, or when it is fair."

"Here Jarvy, old fellow, as this gentle-

man has been generous with my purse, there's a crown for you," good-naturedly said another of the party, in reply, who was muffled up in an opera cloak, and as advancing to place the coin in the wet and horny hand of the obsequious and half-drowned driver.

"Petruchio's character was deucedly well sustained! I say, Count, could you think you get the moral influence over such a wench as Kate?" asked the third, as the trio boisterously entered the splendid entrance hall of the club, and aroused to consciousness the half-dozing porter, who till the moment had been very comfortably composed in the huge leathern chair, which it was his wont to occupy in the night watches."

"If the prize were worthy of the labour, I'm willing to test my powers, even at so difficult a task as Petruchio's," was the answer. "But, my dear fellow," continued he, "never mind the play; I want some refreshment; I am as gaunt as an unfed Tartar. Waiter, follow, and receive orders

for supper. What have you ; what can you let us have quickly ? We don't want any coarse utilitarian provender, but some dainty edibles, worthy of connoisseurs' attention, and that won't bring on nightmare by their indigestibility," somewhat drolly said the wearer of the opera cloak, as he and his jovial companions advanced towards the coffee-room. On reaching that capacious and brilliantly lighted apartment, these roistering spirits proved to be no other than Puffendoff, Inglis, and Lord Squanderfield, who had essayed to relieve the tedium of this miserable night by going to the theatre.

Puffendoff carelessly threw from him his cloak, and himself into a luxurious chair, Lord Squanderfield, as if solicitous to ascertain whether the damp night had marred his good looks, approximated the lofty glass over the mantel-piece, and Inglis, according to his custom, feathered up his hair, and in something of leisurely gentlemanliness, leaned his shoulder against the edge of the marble chimney piece, dexterously balancing himself upon one leg, and then casting

around him a peering look at two or three small knots of clubites, who, in various parts of that spacious room, were cozily drawn together.

With that marvellous expedition, and in all that nicety of preparation only beheld in a London club house, a cold repast was placed before them, to which the trio sat down with manifest gusto. The inviting viands had the effect for a brief period of stilling their tongues, but they were none of them individuals with cloven tongues.

"You spoke about getting a moral influence over Katherine. Egad, I wish I could get a moral influence over Bianca! She is a deucedly charming girl! I wonder what she is like in the green room—without her spangles? It would meet with my views to be a sort of vice-Lucentio, and really I then—"

"I blush for you, my lord, I do, indeed, Squanderfield!" archly and ironically said the Count, interrupting him.

"Come, come, Puffendoff, that's a very fine idea for you to blush at such peccadillos.

Have you heard of such an expression as straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel?" jeeringly answered Lord Squanderfield. "Then we will eat and not talk, if my observations hurt your tender sensibilities."

"Perhaps you are thinking of that supper room in Padua, presented to your vision but two hours ago, and remember Lucentio's words," said the Count:—

"Feast with the best, and welcome to my house,
My banquet is to close our stomachs up
After our great good cheer."

"Then I will make old Petruccio's caustic answer:—

"'Nothing but sit and sit, and eat and eat!'"

"Aptly quoted, my dear Puffendoff, and most revered censor! I'll cite also:—

"O Tranio, till I found it to be true,
I never thought it possible or likely;
But see! while idly I stood looking on,
I found the effect of love in idleness:
And now in plainness do confess to thee—
That art to me as secret and as dear
As Anna to the Queen of Carthage was,—

Tranio, I burn, I pine, I perish, Tranio,
If I achieve not this young and modest girl;
Console me, Tranio, for I know thou canst;
Assist me Tranio, for I know thou wilt."

"My lord, your memory is so retentive of the play that methinks you would have prompted John Kemble marvellously well. But excuse me, Squanderfield, I will be no Tranio to your intrigues, and will, however, say with Tranio from whence you have recited :

" 'Master, it is no time to chide you now;
Affection is not rated from the heart:
If love have touch'd you nought remains, but so—
Redime te captum quam queas minimo.'"

"But ah!—who comes here? 'Tis Fitzgerald, I declare. What, have you too been a play-goer this wet and cheerless night, my dear Jerry?"

"By my faith just something in that way of amusement. What, are you supping?"

"Come here, Fitzgerald, sit by me on this chair which stands in readiness for your honoured burden," spoke Inglis invitingly, and pushing towards the just arrived the unoc-

* Taming of the Shrew. Act I. Scene I.

cupied seat, "we have not long begun our repast—the lobster salad excellent, scoloped oysters, undoubted natives, and most savoury morsels, and the—"

"With all my heart I'll join ye, and by Saint Patherick I will *imprimis*, pay my devoirs to the lobster salad."

"A few moments sooner, Jerry, and you would have heard his lordship spouting Shakspeare. One fair Bianca, on whose witcheries he hath gazed to-night, and who with sylph-like tread has tripped the boards, hath in very truth stolen away, *volens volens*, his too sensitive and quickly captivated heart!"

"By the powers! as far as my own experience goes, stolen hearts are a kind of property soon recovered, and when regained are seldom injured by the theft," laughingly replied the Hibernian.

"You sons of the Emerald Isle are a set of careless, roving, love-making, and love-forgetting dogs, who, with every moon could make a fresh and fiery love, and the last vowed to, desired the most, because, forsooth,

she was the last; on this side the Irish sea we are more stable, and in all such matters more unchangeable," observed Inglis with a smile.

"By Jove she is a charming creature, and I will gain an introduction to her if I live—I will!" said Squanderfield, at the same time heartily bringing down his clenched fist on the table in vulgar manifestation of his resolve. "Did you not see her at Drury Lane to-night, Fitzgerald?"

"No, I have been to profit by a more refined performance. I have been, my lord, to the Italian Opera."

"*Diavolo* take your Italian Operas; their mawkish foreign tastes, are corrupting our pure Anglo-Saxon fashions—perverting our old English customs. Our fathers and grandfathers in good old times were wont to love the British Drama, and is the genius of the stage to be usurped by swarthy fiddlers and equivocal cantatrices? Sorry for your morbid partialities, Fitzgerald—sorry for you, my good fellow—I am indeed!" observed Squanderfield, whose boast it was that he

was English to the back-bone, and that he hated everything in the shape and nature of symphonies, sweet concords, and cat-gut.

“Egad! my lord, I could, were I in the learnedly argumentative humour, undertake to prove to you that dramatic entertainments are more peculiarly adapted for that transition state of society when barbarism is giving way to civilized enlightenment than any other. The drama was suited to those periods, when the minds of the masses had to be affected more through the senses than by any principles of abstract reasoning. Was it not so when Homeric tragedies were performed at the Olympic games, and when in the Grecian theatres the creations of Sophocles, Euripides, and Æschylus melted the hearts of ‘god-like men,’ and fired the breasts of Athenian maids and Spartan mothers? Was it not by this, the representative means, that the Roman legions and the crowds of the Forum were incited to bravery when their untutored minds could thus be best impressed? In ages now passing away, the nations of modern Europe have been po-

tently influenced by theatric performances; in the theatre precepts and manners have been taught which impulsated through entire communities. Unlettered understandings can most successfully be acted upon by illustration and character, and mankind are by nature more prone to seek that which delights, which is facile and comprehensive, rather than to elaborate truths from dull and uninteresting sources.

“In these days when the populace can read, when education has become more general, and as all men have more or less of the ideal and creative in their souls, novels and fictitious romances have in a great degree supplied the place of scenic acts and costumed characters. The pictured pages of the Richardsons, Smolletts, and Fieldings, and now of the Great Unknown, are comfortably available over the sea-coal fire, and ‘the mind’s eye, Horatio’ figures up the *dramatis personæ* in all the colouring of effect and fascination which imagination pourtrays. When you can have these luxuries at home, pray who would go to Drury Lane in such

nights as this for the false and foolish addenda of ranting and rouge, spangles and tinsel? Music, sweet, heart overpowering music, with its dulcet sounds has in some measure usurped, and will in greater degree usurp, the place of the drama; to be heard in perfection it must be heard in multitudinous concord—ergo I go to the opera.”

“My dear Fitzgerald, you speak one-sidedly,” replied Lord Squanderfield, who for a brief interval seemed to have forgot Bianca and her charms. “A finely sustained tragedy will ever delight mankind—will always impress the passions of men—it is the palpable and the appreciable revelation of the heart’s hidden workings—the stern and truly delineated portraiture of sentiments, and feelings, which are the natural impulses of the human breast. The beholder gazes with pleasure upon the representation, because his inward emotions at the moment become identified with what he sees and hears—his sympathies are excited towards the cause of injured virtue, or his indignation aroused against tyranny and vice. By the close

approximation to nature, he actually experiences something of the pain he sees inflicted, and feels something of the joy or sorrow which the *denouement* affords. Whatever can excite smiles and tears cannot fail to gratify, and the more consummately perfected the delusion, the pleasure will be the greater.

“There is no description of genius so enchanting, yet transitory, as the histrionic—that genius which in such full measure was given to Garrick, to Siddons, and Kemble, and so long as the effect continues, the beholder is fascinated, spell-bound! There can be nothing of that barbarism of which you speak in those gifted attributes, by which Mrs. Siddons exquisitely delineated the convulsions and machinations which operate from time to time in human bosoms. To reveal passions, essence—to electrify by a word or gesture—to fling the very scintillations of the soul’s fire to those who hear and behold—to throw a kind of reality into what is known as a delusion—by emphasis and a suiting of the word to the action, and the

action to the word, to paint a moral or tell a precept, and print it on the memory for ever—require a combination of qualities, a kind of genius, belonging to the highest order of human faculties, and which when felicitously exerted, could not fail to afford gratification to the most refined understanding. The finely modulated strains of music are but momentary and fleeting; by a voluptuous softness, they entrance and ravish the ear—but this species of entertainment becomes more sought after during the effeminacy and decline of a nation, than during that period of verile vigour, public patriotism, and social greatness, wherein the high destinies of national prosperity are founded.”

“Fitzgerald, my dear fellow, that heterogeneous mixture of esculent vegetables, shell-fish, and the adjuncts, requires a something to qualify it—allow me to present to your notice this very choice Madeira. A few glasses will carry you an octave higher than even Mademoiselle’s carolling notes could quaver,” said Inglis, to the interruption of the dramatic dialogue.

"With pleasure will I act up to your recommendation, Jemmy," answered Fitzgerald, filling his glass, and then with seeming gusto draining the contents.

When supper was concluded, one of this gay and gladsome quartette made the trifling remark that it was decidedly too early to adjourn; and deferentially asked his companions their opinion, as to the propriety of a single rubber before they departed.

"With all my heart," said one.

"Shall have great pleasure," replied a second.

"Undoubtedly there's time enough," answered the third.

They simultaneously rose from the remnants of lobster salad, scalloped oysters, and the etceteras, and followed the waiter up stairs, to a snug out-of-the-way little room, which, from its construction, verily appeared as if the architect had contrived it with a special reference to whist.

"Now my good friends," said Puffendoff very blandly, and very accommodately, "what say you—five guinea points?"

Five guinea points were agreed to, and after calling for partners, the chances fell to the Count and Fitzgerald, his Lordship and Inglis. With all the earnest determination of veteran players the party commenced the game—not a word more than was absolutely demanded, escaped the lips of any, and each gathered up, sorted, and played his cards, with a zeal, and in a spirit of abstraction worthy of a better cause. The rubber was finished, and another, and another; Squanderfield and Inglis lost almost every deal. Punch and brandy were sought as allies in order to ensure better luck. His lordship and Inglis determined to retrieve this ill fortune, and challenged their conquerors to double the points. They agreed, and Inglis and his noble friend were somewhat more successful. To go home was now out of the question—large sums began to change hands, and the excited gamesters played with more eagerness than ever.

Thus did hour after hour steal away until the gay light of the morning began to stream through the crevices of the shutters, and the

rumble of vehicles, and the loud and monotonous voices of street criers, intimated the resuscitation of light and life, and told that another day had broke upon the great city of the world, with all its tumultuous scenes of business and pleasure—thronging crowds, and many hued vocations. On the floor two heaps of cards had risen like mimic mountains, and every game added to their apical increase. The four sat on with countenances somewhat pallid and unquestionably full of thought. Broad day-light superseded the necessity of candles, but they did not desist. Inglis looked haggard, and Squanderfield serious—notes and cheque books lay on the table, and deal succeeded deal—game, game. Breakfast was brought, but so eager and anxious were the players, that they scarcely allowed themselves time to swallow a repast. Under all the impelling and impetuous influences of hope and fear, their seats at the gambling table were resumed. The dull and dreary day wore on, and they now not only increased the points but bet large sums on the chances. Inglis and

his lordship lost tremendously. Puffendoff lent all the cash he had in hand to the latter, and the former having parted with a very considerable sum in the shape of Bank Post Bills, which he had received on the previous day for an important mercantile transaction, had now in repetition drawn cheques for considerable amounts. As Inglis played on and the tide of bad fortune continued to set fearfully against him, he became more and more excited—he knit his brows, strained his aching eye-balls, and it seemed that the more he endeavoured to concentrate his attention to each convulsively snatched up deal, and to remember what cards were out, the more embarrassed he became, and worse he played. At length patience, temper, all gave way—with a fearful oath he threw down the cards hitherto tremulously held, and swore he was not only losing his senses but his sight. Lord Squanderfield remonstrated and besought his partner to go on and try for better luck. The Count and Fitzgerald remained calm, and the former assured his opponents that the fates did take

these odd freaks, yet the only way to retrieve misfortune was to confront her and determine on eliciting her favours. Inglis was prevailed upon—but he could not win—again he began to blaspheme, and in Satanic rage again threw down the cards !

“We'll try the dice—the dice !” exclaimed Inglis in a sort of half-delirious excitement. “D——this nervousness, I can neither hold my cards nor remember how I played them. Perhaps I can tumble out the dice to better luck—if not by G— I am ruined !”

“Certainly—certainly, my dear friend, I'll do anything to accommodate you,” answered Puffendoff at the same time, and as if without concern gathering up the cheques and thrusting them into the breast pocket of his vest. “Fitzgerald, of course you don't object. Jemmy it cannot be denied has not been blessed by his stars to-night, and as far as I am interested, I will gladly agree to try some other game by which mere chances may turn the scale to the losers' advantage. You are silent, Fitzgerald—what say you ?”

"Anything," replied Fitzgerald, doggedly.

The dice were brought, and Inglis madly determined on running every risk to gain back some of the heavy sums he had lost.

"Come, Jemmy, here they are, never say die. If you approve my proposal, I'll have a few throws with you first, and they may be spectators?"

"Oh yes, what shall we name? A hundred?"

"With all my heart," replied Puffendoff. They played, and Inglis won.

"Shall we double the amount?" asked Inglis.

"Yes, if you wish."

Inglis won again, and he was somewhat surprised when the Count could lose with a smile. Throw after throw was now made, and for some time Inglis was the winner. His spirits rose with barometrical exactitude, in a relative ratio to his success; his breathing became hurried, and his red dilating eyes rolled in their sockets like balls of fire. Throw after throw was continued, and ere long he had lost what he had briefly won—

but he was not to be deterred, he must mend or mar himself ere he desisted. It was now the frenzy of madness with him; throw after throw was still continued, and alas! it was indisputable that the same evil genius which had brooded over him at the card-table, was again turning the current against him. In tremulous agony he tried and tried again, but he could not win! Oath after oath, in all the chilling, fearful intonation of demon profanity, fell from his blanched lips—he stamped on the floor—kicked, in wild gesticulation, the heaps of played cards at his feet—vehemently with clenched fist hit the table by which he was standing—yet in very delirium he went on! The Count's hand became less steady than ordinary, and his countenance indicated his own subdued, but uneasy state of mind. His lordship begged Inglis to cease, and on some pretext or another, Fitzgerald stole from the room.

“One throw more, for a thousand—and—” the oath made the apartment echo, and he looked a distracted fiend as he uttered it.

“I am now a large winner, and I cannot

of course refuse your request, yet the longer you play the worse appears your success," said Puffendoff, with whom it was evidently an effort to appear calm, and who unquestionably wished to be off.

"A thousand, and a cheque for an equal amount were placed on the table. The dice were thrown—Inglis lost !

"D— you, Count—I now see what I have fancied—you are a swindler—a robber—a villain—the dice are clogged, you scoundrel—I'll swear they—"

"You lie !" said the Count, whose cheek grew ashy, and who for a moment seemed off his guard.

"I do not—I'll swear they are clogged !"

"My good friend," exclaimed the Count, in a moment recovering his self-possession, "my good friend," repeated he, in taunting accents, essaying to curl his quivering lip into a smile, and at the same time snatching up the dice, "you shall never make such an ungentlemanly—insulting accusation to me again !" As he delivered these words, he threw the dice into the fire, screwed upon his

heel, and, as if to hide his countenance, turned to the window.

"Jemmy—Jemmy, don't say so. What you have said to the Count is a fearful charge, and a man of honour—"

Squanderfield would have gone on in this mildly remonstrating and persuasively pacifying style, had not Inglis in his frenzy interrupted him.

"I'll swear the villain changed them—played foully with cogged dice—why did he throw them into the—"

"You have fairly lost, and—" his lordship was interrupted.

"I did not—and this I tell you, my lord, you three are leagued rascals—yes you are!" exclaimed Inglis, as he breathlessly threw himself, or passively dropped, into the chair.

"I'm sorry for your behaviour," provokingly returned his lordship. "I repeat you have fairly lost, and like most mean-bred, puddle-blooded men as you are, you try to asperse your victor. Sir, were I the Count de Puffendoff, I would endure no such insolence from so basely-descended varlet as you are.

You have imbibed too copiously of the brandy-punch—your tongue falters in its falsehoods, and your eyes look red and drunken—or you must be dreaming of the play you saw some half dozen nights ago, where, in the fifth act, Biron and the princess are in dialogue :—

Biron. Nay, then, two treys (an if you grow so nice)
Metheglin, wort, and malmsey. Well run, dice !
There's half a dozen sweets.

Prin. Seventh sweet adieu !
Since you can *cog*, I'll play no more with you.

Yes, I protest you're wandering—that you are thinking of *Love's Labours Lost*, or you would not thus most wantonly, and most cravenly, have made so shameful a thrust at the iron panoply of the Count de Puffendoff's good name. I, too, lost at cards, and egad ! most fearfully, yet, you see, we aristocrats can lose, and even smile at ill-success !” in an irrelevant and unconnected strain replied Lord Squanderfield, whose profound honour and nice sensibilities had now been what he called cruelly maligned and trampled on.

Inglis seemed for a few moments as if he were smitten by an *aërolite*—his brow grew clammy—his gaze was distracted—his senses swam. He was not listening to the unopportune and burlesque reference made to Shakspeare ; he was silent, lost in bewilderment. The paroxysm of madness returning, he half leapt from the chair, stamped his foot on the floor, and prefacing the exclamation with an awful epithet, vociferated, "I'll swear I have been traduced and plundered by three ruffian robbers, and—and— I am ruined—h—!"

"He's turning drunker still—all at once, by Jove !" coolly and sarcastically said his Lordship. Come Puffendoff, my good fellow, where is your coat ? A feeling of self-respect bids us cut such society as this ; let us effect our exit," then taking up his hat, and after yoking his arm in Puffendoff's, drew the *quasi*-reluctant Count out of the room.

Inglis paced two or three times up and down the apartment, hit his breast as if in despair, poured out menaces, vows, and imprecations, in a tone and manner worthy of

Bethlem or St. Luke's ; then with a maniac's fury he rang the bell, and ordered a bottle of brandy and cold water. The Lethean draught was soon supplied ; he plenished the tumbler in quick repetition, till in no great length of time he fell in a state of inebriated insensibility on the floor ; and after being discovered in this brutified condition, was carried to bed !

CHAPTER XV.

"If thou be'st he: but O! how fallen, how changed!"

PARADISE LOST, l. 84.

"I alone prepare

To struggle against pity, and to dare

A conflict."

DANTE'S INFERNO, Canto ii. 3.

It would not require any great amount of penetration on the part of the reader, to divine the business on which Fitzgerald somewhat abruptly took leave. Puffendoff had adroitly thrust into his hand the cheques received from Inglis; and it was expedient that value should be received for them without delay. It was nearing the time when the banks closed, and the Count had a prejudice in favour of having them cashed with all pos-

sible speed. The Hibernian complied with Puffendoff's wishes.

However paradoxical it may seem, there is such a thing as being in the way and out of the way, that a place may be very near, and to all intents and purposes very far off. It is most unquestionable that there are in the very heart and centre of London obscure little squares, winding streets, homogenous, monotonous looking crescents, courts and terraces, which few persons comparatively speaking know even by name, save those who people them, or who vegetate in their immediate localities. A verification of this assertion is afforded in and around Little Britain. Washington Irving has thrown a sort of classical charm over this district, which is bound up with so many by-past associations, and which is actually connected with the present part of our story.

Well then, in or near Little Britain, it matters not which, stood, and we doubt not still stands a sombre, dingy, smoke-begrimed pile of quaintly built houses, whither the reader must be ideally for the brief space transported.

To enter. On the second story, that small, badly-lighted sitting-room, and the still more obscure dormitory, with which, through folding doors, it communicates, appear in truth only adapted for dinnerless, dining-out, narrow-incomed bachelors, or pittance-portioned spinster annuitants. A retired excise-officer, a respectably half-starved naval captain's widow, or some such hermit-living unfortunate might here drag out existence, and even solace him or herself that there were in very truth thousands in the great metropolis worse housed, and only within reach of a less comfortable abode. The sitting-room, it is true, has two *bona-fide* windows which look into the comparatively out-of-the way and quiet street, but these windows are contracted and quaint in reality, and old-fashioned and historic in their aspect; the wood work is clumsily huge, absurdly substantial; the panes have been scratched and written upon in all directions, and from the gritty, yellowish-green character of the glass it is unquestionable, that since they were placed there great improvements

have taken place in vitreous manufactures. Those two or three dusty, parched-up geraniums, those thick-set prickly cactuses and sickly balsams, appear as if they only on special occasions saw the sun, and were very seldom indulged with the luxury of a genial shower. But they are specimens of vegetable life—kind of typical green things, which to the pent-up denizens of Little Britain, serve emblematically to remind of flowers and fields far away.

The three or four pictures which adorn the shabby papered walls, the faded carpet, antiquated chairs, and as aged tables; and that bilious-hued table cover, indicate in the *tout ensemble* no very flourishing condition on the part of proprietors or occupants. The confined little bed-room possesses but one window, with a far more dreary and heart-depressing prospect, than into the cooped-up street; and the various articles which go to constitute its furniture and fixtures, though tolerably clean and comfortable, are in precise keeping with those in the aforesaid parlour. Those two or three travelling

trunks, that leather portmanteau, and that shabby military cloak, are, however, unexpected and non-harmonious entities here—and the gold-headed cane, the pair of foils, and the two or three beautifully-executed miniatures, which we had well-nigh unobserved, are scarcely in unison with the associations conjured up by a survey of the divers and diverse objects with which they neighbour. That wrinkled-faced, witch-looking hag, on whose ugliness and well-knit frame, years might be expected to fall for half an age to come, powerless, is bustling about, and full of anxiety lest the fire, which she has not long since lighted, should not burn, or that the smoke, in no very unusual spirit of contradiction with smoke, should puffingly essay to find its exit at the door or window, or any way rather than *per viam naturalem*, up the chimney.

But who is that fashionably-dressed, sprightly-looking man, with arms folded, eyes riveted in fixity upon the well-worn hearth rug on which he stands, with his back leaned leisurely against the chimney-

piece? His lips move quick, and anon are calm, as if at times, some turbulent thought arose to which he gives no tongue. A cloud is on his brow, and a melancholy cast tinges with sadness a countenance, aye most comely in its aspect? But hark! in muttering accents he breaks the silence, and list to his words:—

“My father’s reckless ways—his improvidence, his extravagance, more, his evil example, are the remote cause of all the sum total of this piecemeal slipping away from honour and honesty. His vices, his pride, his carelessness, make me well-nigh curse his memory! Had he reared his numerous offspring with thrift and watchfulness—had he inculcated in them the cardinal virtues—industry and self-relying independence—I might not at this moment have been a penniless, a ruined—”

The wheels of a carriage stopped abruptly before the door, and ended his soliloquy. Two gentlemanly-looking men stepped out, nimbly ascended the stairs, and *sans ceremonie* proceeded to the previously described little sitting-room.

"Well! my dear Fitzgerald, how long have you been here?" asked Puffendoff, as he opened the door, and at the same time put on an insinuating smile.

"I have been here at least an hour," answered Fitzgerald, dispiritedly.

"The deuce you have! You have lost no time then, I must confess."

"I suppose I did not; bad deeds are done by post haste expedition—good ones done on foot," was Fitzgerald's aphorismatic answer.

"You speak grandiloquently; but to the important part of the story. Did you reach the bank before it was closed?"

"I did."

"And the little business transacted?" anxiously asked the Count.

"Yes."

"You're a fortunate, clever dog, Jerry, I must say, and when I'm Prime Minister, you shall be the Chancellor of the Exchequer."

"I think you will some day stand a better chance of a *colonial appointment*," sarcastically and significantly replied Fitzgerald, whose

face lit up with a withering smile, which the Count for an instant seemed scarcely enabled to interpret.

“B’Jove! a very pretty Colonial *secrétaire* you would make, my dear Count, would you not, either for your so-called repudiated country, or any other? What attention you would give to the *res patriæ*! Well! as to myself, I covet not those state distinctions—I seek not sovereign services. In *Henry VIII.*, Wolsey says to Norfolk:—

‘Oh how wretched
Is that poor man that hangs on princes’ favours!
There is betwixt that smile we would aspire to
That sweet aspect of princes, and their ruin,
More pangs and fears than wars or women have;
And when he falls, he falls like Lucifer,
Never to hope again.’ ”

Thus Lord Squanderfield, in his rambling, loquacious way, delivered himself; and as usual, made what he deemed a somewhat apt quotation from his favourite bard.

“Now, my Lord, as far as my feelings go, I had rather that business were transacted first, and spoutings from Shakspeare after-

wards," observed Puffendoff, who appeared a little anxious to enter into more important matters with the strangely taciturn Fitzgerald.

"What is it that makes you so deuced flat this evening my dear Jerry?" asked the Count, as if concernedly.

"What is it that makes a man carry within his own breast his heaven or his hell?—It is, I need not say, a self applauding or reproving conscience," answered Fitzgerald in deliberate and reproachful manner, as he at the same time fixed his glance fully, condemningly, at the Count.

"Humbug! to your sickly sentimentalities," said Puffendoff tartly.

"There!—take these cursed wages of our guilt. I'll have none of them!" emphatically exclaimed Fitzgerald, as he threw in contemptuous shame a large roll of bank notes on the table.

"Sitting up all night has not agreed with our young friend's constitution—'thas made him bilious," melo-dramatically observed Lord Squanderfield, who appeared undecided

as to whether he should be censorious or humorous.

"Don't turn a fool, but square your chair to the table till I count out your rightful third," said the Count, whose countenance had subsided into a shade of sombreness, that well indicated his about-to-be, ruffled temper.

"*Rightful third* indeed!" repeated Fitzgerald. "How robbery may be misnamed, and wrong be appellated by its veriest antithesis right!"

"Fitzgerald, are you beside yourself to-night? If not I conjure you be more guarded in your tongue. I'll brook no words like these. If you deem I will, let me tell you, you mistake your man."

"Come, come, no quarreling" interrupted his lordship. "If Jerry is a little squeamish, and 'twould hurt his nice sensibilities to gather up his share, you and I Count will arrange matters more amicably," with a smile continued Squanderfield.

"There is his portion, and he can please himself whether he take it up or no," said

Puffendoff, as he in anger threw down a part of the notes which he had hastily, nervously counted.

"If you are not really going to turn Methody pocket the cash," archly observed Squanderfield.

"I am going to turn an honest man my Lord !"

"The devil you are—then you'll be a *rara avis* in these days," answered the noble Lord.

"Ere I knew the Count and yourself I exulted in that appellation," excitedly replied Fitzgerald, who paced the room, and seized his hat to depart.

"A very unprofitable kind of pride in the present state of public finance I must confess," provokingly said the Count.

"I may curse the day when I first became acquainted with two such men as you," exclaimed Fitzgerald, as he knit his brows and fixed his angry glance upon the astonished gamblers, whose intimacy he was now about to renounce. "Yes, you dastardly, dishonest knaves ; ere you traduced me to

become an ally in your nefarious practices I had never by word—never by deed, forfeited which every man who reveres the name of man, holds dearer than his existence—I had never forfeited the feelings of honour, the consciousness of self respect. Young and inexperienced in the vices and villainy of the world you sought me as your victim—made me your prey; by the artful expedients of dissimulation and a speciously pretended friendship I was led step by step to pander to your intrigues, until I ultimately have become as darkened as yourselves—aye, and, to my shame until I have been rendered the duped accomplice to crimes for which many have paid the expiation with their lives! But if you now—you whom I fear not to reproach—whom I openly confront—and, too, whom I in all the bitterness of self-accusation for ever despise,—eternally denounce—if you have within your foul and corrupt hearts no compunction—no remorse—if every emotion in the shape of honour and honesty—if all manliness and generosity have forsaken you—if

no desire for atonement—no hope for reformation ever for a moment light up the dark depths of your guilty, your polluted bosoms, let me tell you that O'Conner Fitzgerald will no longer disgrace the ancient name his actions have so long sullied, and which it hath once been his pride to inherit! He will now flee the soil where his criminalities have been perpetrated, and try in other lands to earn a subsistence by honesty and toil, and the last words he can ever address to you, are, that he disclaims you as villains!"

The tone, the manner, the earnestness, the gesticulations, as he held the partially opened door in his hand, and thus delivered himself, were such as to electrify the Count and his Lordship. The denunciatory anger, the vehemence, the fury depicted in the speaker's face, imparted an awe to the astonished hearers—they sat breathless, transfixed! Puffendoff's cheek was pale with rage, and Lord Squanderfield was abashed—overwhelmed! Such a chastising declaration, such an unhesitating accusation of their guilt, and coming not only unexpectedly, but

from one who had even been a sharer in their crimes, knee-bound, tongue-tied them in very consternation ; and when Puffendoff beheld the fiendish wrath which fired from the accuser's eye, he trembled as if an evil spirit in the *personelle* of a recent friend had risen before him to pronounce his condemnation. Squanderfield, like his companion, and like all smitten by an evil conscience, was cravenly silenced, dastardly subdued. For a few moments they sat speechless, and it was not till the loud slam of the front door indicated the departure of Fitzgerald from the house that the Count broke silence.

“ Such is the ingratitude of the world, and those for whom you have been most solicitous are too often the most ungrateful. How frequently I have been the means immediately or indirectly of lining the rascal's purse, and his betrayal is the return.”

Thus, in a self-possessed and deliberate tone, did the Count express himself. It was obvious, however, that the words of Fitzgerald had pierced him to the quick. He had not the power to blusteringly rage, and

passionately vent his anger. The truth—the fearful truth had been told him, and he was overcome by the horrors of an upbraiding conscience—and “conscience makes cowards of us all!”

“Never mind the young fool, let us divide the spoil,” answered his Lordship.

“The babbler may in his spite go and tell our *locale* and—”

“And what’s the odds?” asked his Lordship interruptingly. “No legal measure can be brought to bear upon us.”

“Perhaps it cannot. Law is feeble without proofs; but ’twill be politic for me without delay, to start on a continental tour.”

The twain in a business-like manner counted the money, and after dividing it and settling some small loans, which had in emergencies been granted to each other, they marched off to a neighbouring tavern to discuss the merits of a good dinner, and restore that mental equilibrium which this rupture had for a time destroyed, by means of a generous imbibition of wine—rosy wine.

It may seem odd to the reader when pe-

rusing the course of our narrative, that Puff-endoff had now ceased to talk grandiloquently, and forgot in pompous tone to elongate his syllables. The truth is that such ingenuity, and these kind of paltry expedients, were not indicated, and of course to his own bosom companions he could descend to common-place things and common-place expressions. It was his wont to impiously boast that he could whenever he pleased become, like the great apostolic convert of Tarsus, all things to all men. It might be added also, that his glory was in his shame.





